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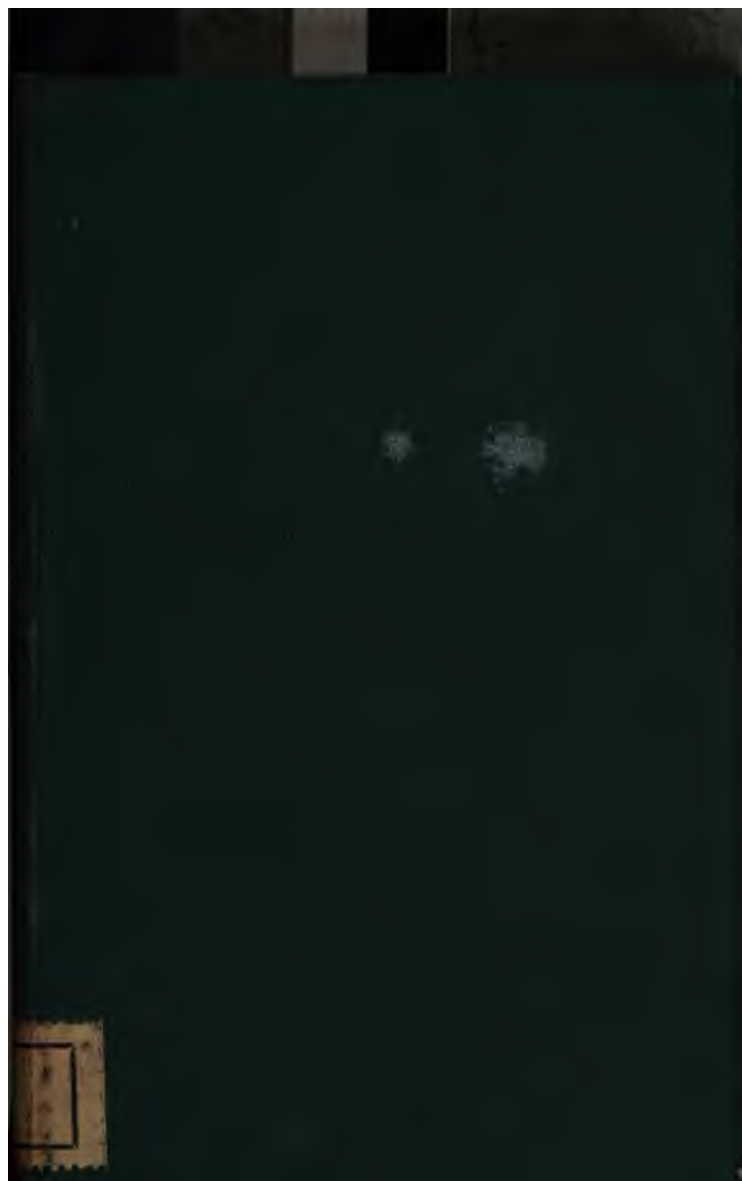
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THE ORPHAN.

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W. Whistler delin.

J. H. P. sculp.

"Mr. Arlington led Henry to the hall-door, where stood bridled and saddled, one of the prettiest little white ponies imaginable."

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THE
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ORPHAN;

OR THE
TRUE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
ILLUSTRATED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"POETIC SKETCHES," "THE TWO COUSINS," &c.

"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO; AND WHEN HE IS
OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT."

PROVERBS xxii. 6.

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THE ORPHAN,

CHAPTER I.

HENRY WILMOTT was an orphan left at the early age of five years to the care of his guardian, Mr Arlington. His parents had both fallen victims to that fearful disease, cholera, which attacked them almost as soon as Colonel Wilmott had joined his regiment in the East Indies, and left their darling and only child in a land of strangers. Mr Arlington was his uncle by the mother's side, and to him was confided their precious babe. Her affection for little Henry had induced his nurse Egerton to overcome her horror of the sea, and accompany his mother to the East Indies ; and most

fortunate was it for the poor child so unexpectedly left to her charge that she did so.

As soon as the remains of Colonel and Mrs Wilmott were consigned to the dust, Egerton embarked with her little charge on board the *Amphitrite*, which was returning to England, that she might place him under his guardian's care.

They had been about six weeks at sea, and all on board had retired to rest, except the officers and men whose duty it was to keep watch during the night, when the captain, who was reading in his cabin, was alarmed by a strong smell of fire, and on opening the door to ascertain the cause, found to his unspeakable horror that the passage was full of smoke. He instantly gave the alarm, and with the greatest presence of mind ordered the boats to be lowered, and guns of distress to be fired, as they were not far from shore. The engines were soon busy at work, and the powder magazine had been floated on the first alarm; but the raging of the flames seemed to bid defiance

to all the efforts of the seamen, who, together with most of the passengers, were ready to sink with fatigue and exhaustion by the side of the engines they were working. The scene on deck was truly terrific, from the shrieks of the females and the appalled countenances of the men, several of whom saw and knew that the boats could not hold them all, and that in every probability before to-morrow's dawn many of them would find a watery grave. The flames were gaining fresh strength every minute, and crash after crash of timber seemed to threaten that the vessel would inevitably be rent asunder, as it was now quivering from the jar occasioned by the masts being cut away and thrown overboard, that they might not add fresh fuel to the devouring element.

Both passengers and seamen now loudly called for the boats, as they feared the ship might go down. All this time had the faithful Egerton stood in what she thought the safest part of the vessel, clasping young Henry in her arms, whilst the poor boy, alarmed at

the agonizing sounds he heard, and the terrified countenance of his usually smiling nurse, threw his little arms round her neck, and clung closer and closer to her bosom. By this time the captain had given his orders for the first boat to be brought alongside the burning vessel, but strongly warned those who were pressing forward of the danger of overloading the frail bark, as they would inevitably sink her. Egerton had eagerly darted forward with the rest ; but with strength of nerve and mind beyond her station, she retreated as soon as she saw the fate likely to befall the poor creatures who were then hastening to certain destruction. Every body made a wild rush to the boat, in spite of the entreaties and warnings of the captain. Friend pushed aside friend, and men with savage haste knocked down women or children, to save themselves from the painful death before them. The captain gave orders for the boat to shove off, and at the sound seven or eight unfortunate individuals sprang into it from the deck. The

consequence was, that, as the captain had foretold, the overloaded boat filled with water and sunk, whilst the frightful screams and groans of the dying were heard above the crackling of the flames. Another boat came alongside, and another rush took place ; but, warned by the melancholy fate of their unfortunate comrades, no such catastrophe ensued, and in that boat were placed Egerton and Henry Wilmott.

When the poor woman found they were really clear of the burning ship, and gaining upon the shore, she could scarcely bring herself to believe in her deliverance ; and it was not until she actually stepped upon the land out of the reach of the waves, and the still more fearful flames, that she could find words to thank the Almighty for thus hearing her prayers, and preserving her and her charge from such a painful death.

The captain was the last man who left the ship, so determined was he to do all that human power and ingenuity could to save the lives of those intrusted to his care ; and it was there-

fore the last boat that returned and took him on shore just a moment before the vessel fell to pieces. They had barely time to get clear of her falling timbers.

The place where they landed was dreary and desolate; but to those who had just escaped from such a scene of horrors, it seemed far different.

The night was clear and warm, and as they could not see a vestige of a human dwelling, the party laid themselves down under a hanging cliff, which protected them from the wind, and slept soundly. The sun had risen some hours before the wearied seamen unclosed their heavy eyes, worn out as they had been with the fatigue they had undergone the preceding evening.

When at length they did awake, and gazed around them, it was some seconds ere they could distinctly recall what had taken place, and become fully aware of their present situation.

On examining the coast, nothing but dreary

rocks met their view, with no sign of dwellings or cultivation; but as several of the seamen and passengers, as well as the captain, had the forethought to secure firearms before they left the vessel, they contrived to live upon the wild fowl with which the place luckily abounded. They also erected some tents for the women; as they were enabled at low water to secure several of the sails that had with the masts been thrown overboard; and thus a temporary asylum was afforded them from the inclemency of the weather, which at this period, though not cold, was very stormy.

Thus passed a tedious week, and the party were beginning to be seriously alarmed as to their future prospects; while poor Egerton regarded her precious charge with much anxiety, as he evidently was suffering from the want of proper nourishment, and the hardships he encountered, which, in spite of the hourly attention and affectionate solicitude of his nurse, were unavoidable.

At length the sight of a sail against the

horizon gave a throb of delight to every bosom. And now the agony of doubt arose, as to whether she would approach the land near enough to see the signal which they had hoisted; for their fears, as they intensely watched the vessel, made them fancy she was standing away from the shore, and every eye was strained, and every voice was hushed, from overpowering agitation.

At length they could plainly perceive that she had seen their signal, and was making towards them. Nearer and nearer she approached; their hearts beat high with joy and hope; and they once more breathed freely, when they could discern a boat lowered and coming rapidly towards them.

Words cannot express the feelings of the party when they found themselves rowing to the ship; and in one short hour they were safe on board the Tigris, and once more on their way for Old England.

Nothing material passed during the remainder of the voyage; and when landed at

Portsmouth, and safe from the horrors of the sea, Egerton felt now more strongly than ever how mercifully she had been preserved and supported by the Almighty in all the trials she had undergone; and when she said her prayers that night before retiring to rest, she implored that her late sufferings might have the beneficial effect of never allowing her to lose sight of or cast off her dependence upon the merciful Disposer of all things.

Egerton's first object was to proceed immediately to Henry's uncle; and the next morning they stept into a chaise, which was to convey them to Mr Arlington's house in Grosvenor Square, where they arrived about six o'clock in the evening; but great was Egerton's consternation at finding that Mr Arlington no longer dwelt there, but had sold his house, and left it nearly six months before. Luckily she knew the address of his lawyer, and desired the postilion to proceed there instantly.

Mr Darton, for such was his name, upon hearing who she was, immediately insisted upon

her remaining at his house for the night, promising to direct her the following day to Mr Arlington, who had recently purchased a house in Surrey, about forty miles from London, as he found the country air necessary for his health. The next morning Egerton and her young charge left their beds much refreshed by a comfortable night's rest, particularly the former, who felt much of her heavy responsibility vanish, as she found herself approaching the end of her journey, and that she had actually arrived in London.

Mr Darton, after giving her the necessary directions to Mr Arlington's, ordered a chaise to the door, and at ten o'clock that morning little Henry and his faithful attendant were on their road to Broomfield Priory.

Henry's astonishment was extreme, as the chaise rolled along the streets of London ; he had never seen so large a town before, nor such a multitude of people.

He asked innumerable questions, scarcely waiting for an answer ; but as they left the

smoke of the city behind them, and the fresh aspect of the country and the green fields and luxuriant trees met his sight, he was in a perfect ecstasy, and longed to stop the carriage to pick some of the beautiful gay-coloured wild-flowers he saw growing amongst the corn and by the roadside.

It was the month of July, and every tree and shrub had attained their full luxuriance of foliage; while even the oak, which is always the last to unfold its buds, was seen in its perfect beauty, the dark green leaves forming a rich contrast to the lighter tinge of the elm and the ash.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the chaise stopped at the lodge of Broomfield Priory; and as they drove up to the door, little Henry's natural shyness made him cling to his beloved nurse. He found himself about to be ushered into a family of strangers; and the poor little fellow burst into a flood of tears as he was shown into the drawing-room, which was filled with company; and for the first time

for many months, he called on his deceased parents.

Mrs Arlington was quite overcome at the little orphan's distress ; and feeling that he would never recover himself before so many strangers, she kindly took him in her arms, and requested Egerton to accompany her to the library, where they would be more private.

Here she drew the trembling child into her lap, and desiring Egerton to sit down close to him, her gentle voice and tender manner gradually soothed young Henry's feelings ; and before half an hour had elapsed, the child was folding his little arms round her neck. At this moment Mr Arlington made his appearance, to inquire for his nephew.

He was a kind-hearted man, and, as well as his wife, possessed every requisite for winning a child's affection. In a very short time Henry felt quite happy in his home ; and as Egerton was putting him to bed that night, he exclaimed that he dearly loved his new friends.

Egerton's mind also was greatly relieved on her little charge's account, when she witnessed the kindness and sympathy of the people among whom it would in future be his lot to dwell.

The next morning when he got up he looked round the pretty little room that had been prepared for him, and was quite delighted with all he saw ; but when Egerton opened a door in his bedroom, which led to a little sitting room furnished with great care, his joy knew no bounds ; particularly when he was told that it was for Egerton and himself, and that it was there he would learn his lessons, and afterwards play about as much as he liked.

Egerton took him down after breakfast to see Mr and Mrs Arlington, who kissed him, saying how pleased they were to hear he was so much delighted with his room ; they requested him to go up and put on his things, that he might take a walk in the grounds and gardens belonging to the Priory.

Henry was but a moment in being dressed, so impatient was he to see every thing out of

doors ; so that he soon joined his guardian, who took him to view the pigeons, the fowls, and the swans that were sailing majestically on the piece of water in the park, and the deer ; all which were quite new to the child ; who, before he returned home, skipped and played by the side of his kind guardian as if he had known him all his life.

Thus two or three years passed away, Henry Wilmott being treated by Mr and Mrs Arlington as their own child, and indulged in every thing proper for his age, when his behaviour and diligence in his studies merited such encouragement.

It was seldom that his guardian found it necessary to punish Henry, as he was naturally of so tractable and affectionate a disposition that the idea of giving pain to his kind uncle and aunt was generally a sufficient stimulus to good conduct.

This affectionate disposition so much endeared him to Mr and Mrs Arlington, that the latter took the greatest pleasure in instructing

him herself; and he was often rewarded, after a morning of great attention to his studies, on his return from a walk, with sitting by her while at work, and hearing some pretty story, of which he was never tired.

CHAPTER II.

ONE day Henry returned from his walk, much concerned about a beggar boy whom he had met, and who had greatly excited his pity as he was telling all his sorrows to Egerton. Mrs Arlington instantly gave orders that the poor child should be relieved, and took means for ascertaining the truth of his statements, which she found to be correct in every particular.

A few days after this, as Henry was seated on his stool by her side, entreating her to tell him a story, she took the following verses out of her writing-table, and read them to him.

THE BEGGAR BOY'S TALE.

I WANDER o'er mountain, I wander o'er moor,
Both weary and desolate, hungry and poor,
My father is dead, my poor mother is dying,
And four half-starved children around her are lying.

Oh! sad was the hour; and 'twas fearful to see
My mother's pale cheek, as I sat on her knee,
When my father departed to brave the wild roar
Of the waves, as they fearfully dash'd on the shore.

"O husband," she said, "it is awfully dark;
The sky is o'ercast, and see yonder frail bark,
Tremendously pitching, is toss'd by the gale
Far distant to sea, with a rent in each sail.
In vain are the sailors now striving to tack,
The wind or the current anon drives them back.
O, husband! dear husband! I beg you to stay,
And tempt not the sea on so fearful a day.
No fish can you catch, and if thousands you'd give,
No boat in that surf for a moment could live."

"Dear Kate," said my father, "if I do not go,
Who can feed the poor children, whose tears often flow
For food which we have not to give them? then, pray,
Dearest wife, do not further implore me to stay;
I shall quickly return, and cast out but one net
To try by good luck some fine turbot to get."

He then left the cottage, and hasten'd to reach
His boat, as it lay high and dry on the beach,
Halloo'd to his comrades, who came at his call,
And help'd him his tight little vessel to haul
Close down to the shore, and with sinews so stanch
They manage full quickly the vessel to launch.

"Why, Stephen," says one, "surely you must be mad,—
When I see you return it will make me right glad;
What! venture to sea on a night such as this!
The landmarks and bearings you're certain to miss;

The boat will be swamp'd ere she's clear from the shore,
And friends, wife, or children, you'll never see more !”

“ Peace, peace,” said my father, “ my children must live,
And for food to them all I've no money to give ;
No, no, I must go ; so God bless you, my friends !
I trust my success will soon make me amends
For the hardships I suffer, the labour and toil,
When safe I return with my fine scaly spoil.”

So saying, he push'd the boat off from the shore,
By the strength of his arm and the force of his oar.
She was fearfully toss'd, as she flew through the surge,
Whilst the seagulls seem'd screaming his funeral dirge.
In vain he attempted to haul up a sail,
It was shiver'd to fragments by force of the gale ;
Th' entreaties and prayers of his fond anxious wife
Too late he remember'd, and felt that his life
Would not have been uselessly thus thrown away
Had he listen'd to her, who implored him to stay.
His command of the vessel was totally lost,
And high on the waves was the little skiff toss'd ;
The currents were driving her fast on a rock,
And rudder and helmsman alike seem'd to mock.
My father perceived it, and, reft of all hope,
Found 'twas useless with such raging billows to cope ;
He then prayed that his sins might each one be forgiven,
And, humbly resign'd to the decrees of Heaven,
Prepared to meet death as a good Christian should,
Assured that all trials are sent for some good.
The vessel soon struck, and my father could feel
That the shock of the contact had stove in her keel.

No help was at hand, and the water rush'd fast
Through the gap, while the hurricane shiver'd the mast.
My father then swam for his life to the shore,
But the tide was against him, and instantly bore
Him much further to sea. He continued to swim,
Till, worn and exhausted in every limb,
His head became dizzy, film cover'd his eyes,
His senses forsook him, he heard not the cries
That arose from the land; then his sufferings were o'er,
And the fishermen found they could see him no more.
He now quietly sleeps in old Ocean's rough bed,
And the rock that he split on now pillows his head.

Then lady, dear lady, oh! turn not away,
But let me entreat you one moment to stay;
Oh! pity my mother, whose illness and grief
Require your compassion and instant relief.
Oh! think me not false, or my story untrue,
You surely would pity me if you but knew
The hunger and cold, desolation and wo,
That, houseless and friendless, we must undergo,
Exposed to all evils, to snow, cold, and rain,—
You'd wonder how nature could suffer such pain.

O thank you, kind lady, for all that you give,
May blessings attend you as long as you live,
For relieving the wretched, and saving the life
Of a desolate widow, so lately a wife.
Then farewell, kind lady, to mother I go,
To take her the food and the gifts you bestow.
That Heaven may reward you and yours from this day,
The grateful young wanderer ever will pray!

"Oh, my dear aunt," exclaimed Henry, as soon as Mrs Arlington had finished, "why I declare you have been writing the history of the little boy we met the other day. How shocking it is to think that people are in such distress! Do you think there are many persons in this world who have met with such misfortunes as this little boy and his family?"

"Indeed, my dear," said his aunt, "I am sorry to say there are hundreds of poor creatures in as great distress as our little friend, whilst we are enjoying every blessing of life."

"Oh, I cannot bear to think of it," said the kind-hearted little Henry, whilst the tears filled his eyes; "do let me save my money for these forlorn creatures!"

"My dear child," said his aunt, "it is quite right that we should all of us remember the needy, and I am delighted that you have yourself proposed laying by some of your money for that purpose. I should have made the proposal myself, but felt certain that whenever any thing happened that would call your attention

to the subject, my little Henry would never be averse to lay by a portion of his weekly money for the purpose of relieving distress. Your uncle was telling me only yesterday that he intended to allow you half-a-crown a-week as pocket-money, so that you will be able to put your charitable plan in execution immediately."

All this was delightful news to Henry ; and not a week elapsed without his putting a shilling apart into a box for this purpose, to which an extra sixpence was frequently added.

The boy's mother, whose pressing wants Mrs Arlington had relieved, was placed in a comfortable cottage, and being a good worker, was provided with constant employment at the Priory. Her children were placed at school, and plenty and contentment once more smiled upon her dwelling. This was a great happiness to Henry, who often called at the cottage in his walks ; for Mrs Arlington thought it right that he should be acquainted with the wants of the poor, and generally made him her companion

when she went to visit the cottagers, and inquire into their distresses.

There were two old women in particular who were pensioners of Mrs Arlington's. They dwelt in different parts of the village, and were very opposite in their characters and dispositions; which will appear from the following conversation with their kind benefactress.

"Well, Betty Smith," said Mrs Arlington, as she entered the old woman's cottage, "how do you feel to-day?"

"I am nearly bent double with this terrible rheumatism, thank you, madam," was Betty's reply, as she lifted up her head from her Bible, which she was reading as they entered.

"You must find great comfort in that book, Betty."

"Why, yes, ma'am, sure enough I do; I never read any thing else, and I hold that it is a sinful waste of time for folks to read story-books of travels and such like; old Martha, to be sure, reads her Bible a great deal also; but then it is an awful thing to see her at her time

of life poring over stories of people in the snow-countries they call the North Pole, and all about bears and such like, as if God would be pleased with such things. I should be sorry to have *her* sins to answer for."

"Indeed, Betty, in that case," said the lady, "I suspect you would have fewer sins to answer for than most of us; for I consider Martha Hall as the most perfect pattern of a good Christian; and do you suppose the Almighty can look with eyes of displeasure on her for reading the books you allude to, which narrate anecdotes that fill her mind with wonder at his power and goodness?"

"Gracious, madam," exclaimed old Betty, petulantly, "I dare say she is better than poor I; but for all that, I shall stick to my Bible. She was telling her grandchildren a long story about the bears and the fishes, when I thought she would have been better employed in reading them a chapter of the Bible."

"I agree with you," said Mrs Arlington, mildly, "that children should often hear the

Bible read, and Martha, I know, reads the Bible to them every evening ; but I also commend her for relating to them the tales you mention, as it fills their young minds with awe at the wonderful works of their Maker, and the wisdom with which he has provided various creatures with habits and conditions suitable to different climes.

“ For instance, when Martha told her grandchildren of the inhabitants of the North Pole, where everlasting snow covers the country, she informed them how mercifully the Almighty had provided beasts whose skins served the Esquimaux for clothes ; that whales inhabit those frozen seas, which supply the inhabitants with oil for their lamps during the many months which they would otherwise have to pass in complete darkness.

“ All this amuses the children, and instructs them at the same time ; and I dare say these stories will make a greater impression on their minds than if she was perpetually reading the Bible to them ; as it might at their age have

the effect of wearying them,—the thing most to be avoided.”

“ Well, ma’am, of course you must be right,” said Betty, in a fretful tone, which plainly said, ‘ you must be wrong ;’ “ but for all that, Mr Wronghead told me that such reading was a great waste of time, and that Martha Hall had a great deal to answer for in reading such frivolous nonsense.”

“ Indeed,” rejoined Mrs Arlington, “ I am sorry I cannot agree with Mr Wronghead ; and I think that our truly worthy clergyman, Mr Richards, would also differ from him, as he highly approves of Martha’s course of reading, and readily supplies her with the books of which you entertain such a horror.”

“ Well,” eagerly said the old woman, “ I am sure nobody can think Mr Wronghead any thing but a *saint-like* man, for he goes to no parties, he never reads any thing but his Bible or sermons, and has scripture phrases at his finger-ends ; he scarcely ever smiles ; looks severely, as he passes them, upon the lads, play-

ing at cricket upon the green of an evening, and blesses himself that he is not like one of those sinners."

"I am afraid, Betty," said Mrs Arlington, "that Mr Wronghead, from that speech of his, rather resembles the Pharisee, who said his prayers to God, and instead of asking forgiveness for his sins, presumptuously thanked the Almighty that he was not an extortioner, or unjust, as other men were, and whom our blessed Saviour condemned as wanting the two great virtues, absolutely indispensable in his followers,—those of humility and charity. Besides, Mr Wronghead is one of those people who are always finding out some flaw in the character of their neighbours, and discovering the mote in their brother's eye, but see not the beam in their own."

"Our just and all-wise God and Saviour has sent religion to cheer our passage through life, to lighten our cares, and make us as happy as is consistent with our state in this world; and instead of looking upon innocent mirth and re-

creation as signs of wickedness, I never see a cheerful and even-tempered person like Martha Hall, without feeling sure that hers is the true faith 'that casteth out fear.'

"Never do you see that good woman looking about for faults in her neighbours, but always ready to find some excuse for them ; for she reads in our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, and sees that 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy ;' and, above all, that verse, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.'

"You seem, Betty, to look upon Mr Wrong-head as a pattern of perfection, and to think his abuse of his neighbours a sign of piety ; but if we read our Bible properly, we must see that it would be better and more becoming in all of us to search out our own faults, than endeavour to spy out the shortcomings and frailties of our brethren."

Old Betty was completely silenced, though

not quite convinced, by Mrs Arlington's reasoning, and began to think upon all that had been said to her, when the party left her cottage to go and seek that of Martha Hall.

This visit was always a great treat to young Henry, as the old woman was sure to tell him some nice story, or show him her bees or flowers, of which latter she generally contrived to have some very fine ones along the little borders on each side of the neat gravel walk which led to her cottage. Over its old-fashioned porch hung clusters of the small black grape, and the walls were quite hidden by jessamine, woodbine, and ivy, carefully trained as high as the thatch.

The old dame was knitting in the porch when they came in sight of the cottage, and bustled forward to welcome them with a face beaming with content and good humour.

"You are always busy, Martha," said Mrs Arlington, as she stepped into the house; "you see I have brought Mr Henry to pay you a

visit once more, and I hope you are quite well, and are not troubled with the rheumatism, like Betty Smith."

Martha replied that she was thankful to say she was very little troubled with it; "but," added she, "I do so pity poor Dame Smith, for she is a sad sufferer; and when the children and others complain that she is so cross, I always say we should be cross too if we suffered as much as she does. It is easy enough to be good-tempered when our bodies are tolerably free from pain. She is a good woman though, and is always studying her Bible, which must be a great consolation to her in her illness."

"I see your Bible open on the table," said Mrs Arlington, "so that you also find it a great comfort, I dare say."

"Indeed I do, dear madam," said the happy old woman; "but it is my grandchildren who have left it open on the table, for they are never tired of hearing and reading it; but I always make it a treat for those who have behaved well during the day at school, and they

are very unhappy if they have behaved in such a manner as to prevent their being one of the party when it is read. But pray, Mr Henry, let me show you the bees. One of my hives has just swarmed, so you see I have five this summer."

Henry most willingly trotted after the old woman to see the hives, and asked her a thousand questions concerning them.

"Only look!" said the child, "see how many are flying home laden with wax on their little legs, with which to build their cells!—What makes them all come home at once, and in such a hurry?"

"It is a sign that they expect rain, for, look, a cloud is passing over the sun, which generally frightens them back to their hives; and you see they were not mistaken, for it is dropping already, and we had better make haste back to the house, or we shall get very wet."

All this time there was a great humming in the air, occasioned by the rapid return of the bees to their different hives, and it was

curious to observe them pouring in from all quarters in dread of the coming shower ; and when the dame and Henry returned to the cottage, he begged her to tell him some more about them, and she accordingly related to him all she knew.

“ You will be surprised to hear, Mr Henry,” said Martha, “ as the pretty books on Natural History tell us, that each hive has got a queen, or mother-bee, who is the parent of the whole, laying a great number of eggs, from which proceed the many thousands that form the community. The great majority of these are called working-bees, or workers, because they provide the daily food, and the winter store—the sweet honey—while some of them make the beautiful comb, and others take care of the young. Then, there are besides a few male ones, which are very necessary, but being also very luxurious and idle, they are called drones ; and before the severities of winter come on, the workers combine against them, chase them away from the provision-cells, to the bottom of the hive,

where, imprisoned and starved, and from their want of stings unable to resist, they fall an easy prey to their active assailants, who sting them to death, and cast them to the outside."

The shower was by this time over, and the sun had again burst forth, when Mrs Arlington rose to take leave of Martha; but Henry begged once more to visit the hives, to see if the bees were again venturing abroad, now that the weather was fine.

As he expected, he found them departing in search of more honey; and was surprised to hear that such tiny creatures would fly to the distance of several miles from their dwelling.

Mrs Arlington and Henry once more bid adieu to the good-natured old woman, and took the path to the Priory.

"Aunt," said the child, "I have been thinking of the difference between Betty Smith and Martha Hall, and I should like best to be of Martha's religion."

"And why, my love," said his aunt, "do you prefer the religion of Martha?"

“Because, from what you said to that ill-natured old Betty, I am sure Martha must be the one that God loves most ; for you recollect, aunt, how she excused old Betty’s temper ; it put me in mind of what our Saviour says, ‘Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.’ Now, aunt, I think that Martha is quite the character that God loves, and that is why I like her religion more than Betty’s.”

“Indeed, my love, you have given a very good reason for your choice, and I hope you will endeavour to imitate Martha’s humble piety, and Christian charity to her neighbours, of whom you never hear her say an ill-natured word.

“Religion, my dear boy, a most merciful and bounteous God has sent to make us happy, and all innocent amusements are some of the blessings he has permitted to lighten our path in this life, and by giving us employment, they often keep us from much mischief ; at the same

time we must never neglect the more important duties of religion."

"I have remarked another difference between these old women, aunt," said Henry. "Betty is always talking of how much she reads and prays, and you never hear Martha mention such things, unless you happen to introduce the subject; and you recollect what you were reading to me yesterday, that we are not to pray, to have glory of men, but that when we pray, we should pray to our Father which is in secret, and he will reward us openly."

"This is very true, my dear," said Mrs Arlington; "and I rejoice to see that you remember what you read in the Bible, and bring it into every-day use, and I trust you will ever continue to do so, for you see it has enabled you to set a just value on Martha Hall's unaffected piety. And now, my love, we have reached home at last, and as it is past your tea-time, do not be long in taking off your things, for I dare say Egerton has been waiting for you a considerable time."

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning, after Henry had finished his lessons, he seated himself on his little stool in his usual place by the side of his aunt, as the day was so wet that there seemed no prospect of taking a walk that afternoon; so he amused himself by making nets for the gardener, who was delighted when Henry brought him one for his fruit-trees, to prevent the little birds from stealing the cherries.

Being unusually silent, his aunt asked him what he was thinking of so seriously, as she had not heard the sound of his voice for the last quarter of an hour,—a most extraordinary occurrence, for Henry was a great talker.

“Why, aunt, I have been thinking how very odd it is that some people find it tiresome to say their prayers and read the Bible, and they say it is so stupid.”

"When, my dear," replied his aunt, "have you ever heard people talk in this manner?"

"All my cousins say so, and declare that when they have their own way, they will not do so any more."

"I am grieved to hear of any thing so shocking," said Mrs Arlington, "for it is a sign that their minds must be in a sad state, and they are much to be pitied, as their parents left them orphans at a very early age, and old Mr Russell, their uncle, intrusts them entirely to the care of a governess, who I am afraid does not understand their different dispositions and tempers."

"Indeed they are to be pitied," said Henry; "but oh, my dear aunt, what a wicked boy I should be, if I did not love you and my dear uncle for all the care and trouble you have taken with me ever since my papa and mamma died!" And as he finished speaking, he jumped up and threw his arms round his kind aunt.

"Indeed, my love, I think we shall never have to repent any trouble we have taken on

your account, as you have been a dear, good little boy ever since you came under our roof, and as long as you continue so, I shall always take a pleasure in my little companion.

“ But, to return to the subject we were talking about, tell me why you are so much surprised at your cousins’ dislike to religion.”

“ Is it not surprising,” said Henry, eagerly, “ that any body should be so foolish as to dislike and feel weary of asking God to take care of them, to make them good, and to forgive them their sins? Without saying these prayers, we can neither feel safe during the day nor the night ; and if we are not good, and God does not forgive us our sins, we can never expect to go to heaven ; and oh ! think only for a moment how dreadful it would be to go to hell when we die, because we had neglected praying to God when we lived. And so, aunt, the more I think of it, the more surprised I am at my cousins ; for, after I have said my prayers, I always feel happy, because I know that God listens to us if we pray in ‘ spirit and in truth.’ ”

“ My love, I am quite of your opinion,” said Mrs Arlington ; “ it is really very astonishing when people are not interested sufficiently, whether they go to heaven to be eternally happy, or by their sins and carelessness suffer everlasting torments. We all know, that it is only by praying fervently to our God, through the intercession of our Saviour, that we can be saved from the temptations that the devil is ever setting before us, and that we are enabled to avoid such snares ; therefore, as you justly observe, the choice is between unspeakable happiness and the most dreadful misery.”

“ Indeed, dear aunt, it makes me shudder to think of it. How good God is to send his dear Son to die for our sins, after Eve had made all mankind sinners by her disobedience to his commands ! But, aunt, besides not liking to engage in prayer, my cousins say, that if they had their own way, they would read nothing but story-books ; and that surprised me as much, for is not the whole Bible full of true stories ? and I never read a more interesting one than

that of Joseph, who was sold by his brothers, and came to be such a great man in Egypt, and then forgave them all.

“ Then there is Cain killing his brother Abel ; and Balaam’s ass, which God allowed to speak ; and the history of our Saviour when he was a babe lying in a manger. How can they make out that the Bible is dull ? ”

“ Indeed, Henry, you may well ask that question. It is astonishing ; for we generally think those tales most interesting that are founded upon facts, which is the case with all we meet with in the Old and New Testaments ; whereas those to be found in story-books are written to amuse, and cannot therefore be generally true.

“ But well-written story-books are very useful, and I like you to read them ; though I should much regret if you preferred them to the Book of Truth.

“ And now, my love, I must put up my work, and you had better put away your net, for you have had no exercise all this afternoon ;

so take your ball into the hall, and you will have plenty of room there for a good game." Henry accordingly ran off.

Henry Wilmot was, generally speaking, a docile, good child, but he had his faults as well as other children.

He was remarkably untidy, and most slovenly in his dress; and often, though Egerton had just put on him a clean pair of trousers, shoes, or stockings, the moment he was out of doors he would purposely tread into the first puddle he reached, and consequently was unfit to be seen. He was sure to lose his gloves, and often came home with only one shoe, having left the other sticking fast in the mud.

This was very annoying, and made him often look like a dirty beggar boy, instead of a young gentleman, and his aunt was therefore obliged to speak severely to him on this subject.

It always made him very unhappy to have displeased his aunt; but he soon forgot it, and was as careless as ever.

One day, when he came into the drawing-

room to join Mrs Arlington in a walk, he entered with one shoe without a string, the other down at the heel, and his cap bent in every direction.

“Henry,” said Mrs Arlington, as soon as she caught a sight of his untidy figure, “I am sorry indeed that I cannot let you go with me, for I should be quite ashamed of walking with you; so that, instead of being my companion during this fine afternoon, after you have made yourself fit to be seen you must play about the garden until I return. I shall be some time away, for it is such a beautiful day that I intend going to see your old favourite, Martha Hall.”

Henry was greatly grieved to have deprived himself of so pleasant a walk by his own negligence, and he wisely thought that the only way he could show his aunt how sorry he was to have incurred her displeasure, was by quietly submitting to his punishment without tears or murmurs. He therefore walked away much ashamed of himself and his slovenly habits.

During the time he was left alone in the garden, he made a resolution to be more careful, and to leave off all his unseemly customs ; and on Mrs Arlington's return he ran up to tell her his determination, hoping she would forget what had happened.

“ That I will, Henry,” said she, “ the first moment I see that you strive to conquer your fault ; and your uncle desires me to inform you, that if by this day month I can tell him I have not seen you once with your clothes torn to pieces, and that your books and playthings have not littered every room in the house, and that you have always appeared neat and cleanly, then, he says, he has got a reward in store for you, that you will never be able to guess, but with which he feels certain you will be quite delighted.”

“ How kind of my uncle,” exclaimed Henry ; “ I am sure I will do all you wish, and I shall begin this very moment, by putting my toys to rights, and looking about to collect my books, which I ought long ago to have arranged

in that pretty little bookcase you gave me on my last birthday." So Henry ran out of the room to put all these good resolutions into immediate practice.

One morning, after he had counted up how much he had saved out of his pocket-money to give to the poor, he found he had just ten shillings, so he ran away to ask Mrs Arlington if she thought the sum large enough to buy a prayer-book for Dame Hall.

"Why, my dear, do you wish to give Martha a Prayer-book? I am certain she has got one."

"Yes, aunt, she has one, I know," said Henry, "but the print is so small, that I heard her say one day it hurt her eyes very much indeed, so I thought I should like to give her one with as large print as I could buy."

"I cannot have the slightest objection to your putting your money to such a good use, my dear boy," said Henry's aunt; "and as you have been so very good this morning over that difficult lesson of spelling, I will order the carriage, and we shall drive to Gr—"

this afternoon, that you may choose one yourself ; so ring the bell directly."

Henry did not wait to be told a second time to pull the bell, and Mrs Arlington, after giving her orders, went up stairs to dress. Henry, meantime, with the assistance of Egerton, got himself equipped for the journey ; and when he joined Mrs Arlington in the drawing-room, she praised him very much for looking so smart and clean. His gloves were not bitten, his face was washed, his hair nicely brushed, and not a spot on his shoes.

" Really, if you continue to keep your resolution so well, Henry," said his aunt, " I think you are sure of getting your promised reward ; and it now wants only one week to the time fixed upon by your uncle."

Henry's eyes sparkled with pleasure at the praise he received, and he jumped merrily into the carriage after his aunt.

The drive from the priory to Godalming was beautiful. The sun shone full on Hindhead, a huge hill to the left, which was one mass of

purple from the effect of the beams falling on the heath that grew upon it in great luxuriance.

The road was shaded by trees nearly the whole way, and Henry was quite enchanted with the beauty of the wild flowers which were seen on every side.

He pointed out the bunches of foxglove, with which the sandy banks were covered, and asked his aunt if she did not admire them more than many of the flowers in their garden.

"I do," said Mrs Arlington; "they are splendid plants, and I always observe that they grow more luxuriantly where the soil is sandy. Those beautiful flowers are poisonous, and would kill you were you to eat many of them; at the same time, they are much used in medicine, and there are some complaints in which they are said to be very useful."

"In medicine, aunt?" said Henry; "are flowers ever used in medicine?"

"Yes, my dear, almost every medicine we

take is prepared from some plant ; and others we get from mineral substances. But let us get out of the carriage ; it will be easier for the horses up this hill, and we shall have more leisure to examine some of the pretty flowers as we are walking slowly on."

"Look, aunt, at this white flower ; my uncle told me it was called horehound. Is this used in medicine ?"

"Yes," replied Mrs Arlington, "it is given to people who have bad coughs. But observe that tall plant with hairy leaves and bright yellow flowers ; that is the mullein, and is applied to wounds, as are also the leaves of the ivy, of which a cooling ointment is made."

"Look at that purple flower with a yellow eye, dark green shining leaves, and dark scarlet berries ; how nice they look !" said Henry.

"Their appearance is most deceitful," said Mrs Arlington, "for they are such a strong poison that were you to eat only one, I think it would kill you. That plant is called the deadly nightshade, owing to its fatal properties. You see it

is a creeper, as it twines round other things for support.

“ Do you see that delicate little flower with its pretty green and slightly hairy leaf? That is the woodsorrel, and is reckoned a great purifier of the blood. In short, there is not a plant that has not its peculiar use, either in physic, or as food for birds, beasts, or man; and all these productions of nature should make us reflect on the goodness and mercy of God, who has provided all things in such a wonderful manner. But come; we are now up the hill, and must get into the carriage, or we shall never arrive at our journey’s end.”

They soon reached Godalming, where they drove immediately to the shop of the bookseller, who showed them a great variety of Prayer-books; and after much consultation with his aunt, Henry at last chose one with very large print, in a neat brown binding, and Mrs Arlington bought a pretty green morocco Bible and Prayer-book in a case.

As they were returning home, Henry asked

his aunt to let him see what she had purchased, as he was so busy choosing Dame Hall's Prayer-book that he had no time while in the shop to attend to any thing else ; and when she took the volumes out of the parcel, he could not help loudly expressing his admiration of her choice.

"I am glad they please you," said she ; " you were wishing the other day, my dear boy, to make Egerton a present, who I am sure deserves every kindness from your hands, and nothing you could ever do would repay the obligations you owe to her. So, my love, I bought these books for you, as I thought she would prefer them to any article of dress, as she can keep them for your sake."

Henry was in ecstasies, and thanked his aunt again and again for her kindness.

When they reached home he could scarcely wait to have the carriage-door opened, so eager was he to find Egerton, who was as much pleased with receiving his present as Henry was in giving it.

The next two or three days being wet, Henry was prevented from carrying the Prayer-book to Martha ; but the first tolerably fine day, Mrs Arlington took him with her to the cottage.

CHAPTER IV.

At her usual place in the porch, they found Martha, who was delighted to see them.

"O, Mr Henry," said she, "it is so long since you came to see me, that I began to fear you had quite forgotten me."

Henry blushed, when he recollected why she had not seen him the last time his aunt had paid her a visit, who said, that it was indeed a long time since he had been there, but that she thought he would never be away so long again.

Henry began, very slyly, to ask Dame Hall where her Prayer-book was, for he missed it in its usual place on the window-seat.

"I have given it to one of my grandchildren," said she, "for my eyes are become so old that I cannot read it at all, which is a sad loss to me, for I like to follow the clergyman in the service on Sunday."

Well, dame, then do try if you can read the one I have bought for you ; put on your spectacles, and tell me."

"Thank you kindly, Mr Henry," said the old woman, "but I am sadly afraid that the print of no Prayer-book is large enough for my poor old eyes now-a-days ; but, eh dear ! bless me ! who ever saw the like ? why I can read every word I declare, and almost without my spectacles ! And is this really for me !" exclaimed Martha, in perfect astonishment.

"O ! I do sincerely thank you, Mr Henry," said she, when he assured her that the book was bought on purpose for her.

"I never thought to have read out of such a fine book as this ;" and the old woman wrapt it carefully in a clean pocket handkerchief, and locked it up in a drawer.

"I have been so anxious to see you, Mr Henry," said Martha, after she had thanked him again and again for the Prayer-book,—
"I have been so anxious to see you, for I have got such a beautiful parrot, which one of

my grandsons brought me when he came home from sea.

"Look at its pretty green, yellow, and purple feathers," said she, as she put the cage on the floor that Henry might examine the bird at his leisure.

"Is it not a beauty? it can say a great many words;" and to the astonishment of Henry, who had never heard a bird speak before, it began to say, "Pretty poll! pretty poll! Give me some sugar! How d'ye do! Very well, thank you!" and several other words and short sentences.

Henry admired its gay plumage very much, and was extremely amused by its taking up a lump of sugar in its claw to eat, whilst it rested itself on the other leg.

"Where do these birds come from, aunt?" said he, "for I never see them flying about here."

"They come from the hot countries," said Mrs Arlington; "there are a great number in the West India Islands. Most of the birds

that come from the tropical regions have splendid plumage, but do not sing, whilst our sober-dressed little songsters charm us with their melody ; so you see that Nature has been most impartial in her gifts to the feathered tribes."

" I have several other curiosities to show Mr Henry," said Martha.

" Here are a lot of shells my grandson brought me from foreign parts, and here are some pods of the cotton-tree in their natural state."

Mrs Arlington admired the shells as much as did Henry, who asked of what use they could be, as his aunt had always told him that every thing in Nature had its peculiar use.

" Every shell that you see here, Henry," said Mrs Arlington, " when it was taken from the sea, was the abode of a little animal, that lived in it, as the snails do in their shells ; and observe this beautiful white shell, that is called a nautilus, which I consider the most curious of all, as the fish that inhabits it has the power of putting out a thin membrane ex-

actly like a sail, by which it directs its motions ; and on a calm day it is to be seen gliding along the Indian seas, and from this circumstance is called the Tiny Mariner."

Henry earnestly examined the beautiful shell that had contained such an extraordinary animal, and then begged his aunt to tell him something about the cotton-tree, as he had never seen the pod before, and could scarcely be persuaded that cottons and calicoes were manufactured from such a small thing as he then held in his hand.

Mrs Arlington told him that the cotton-tree grew in the East and West Indies, in America, Egypt, and many other warm countries, and that when the pod, which he saw, was ripe, it was gathered, and the cotton picked out and stowed away in large packages, to be sent to the manufactories of different countries.

The dame then showed him a couple of elephant's teeth, and begged Mrs Arlington would allow Henry to accept of one as a keepsake.

She seemed highly pleased to see how delighted the little boy appeared with his present, and only wished she had something more worthy his acceptance.

"Upon my word, Martha," said Mrs Arlington, as she rose to take leave, "you have a pretty collection of curiosities, and we are very much obliged to you for the pleasant afternoon we have spent in examining your treasures; so now we must say good bye, and do not come out to the gate, for the sun is gone down, and the air is very sharp."

"Thank you, dear madam," said Martha; "but, I must really open the gate for you, or I should fancy myself ill indeed. God bless you and Mr Henry," said she, dropping a curtsey to Mrs Arlington as they left the cottage.

Henry was highly delighted with all he had seen, and his aunt surprised him very much by informing him that the elephant's tooth he was looking at in his hand was what ivory ornaments were made of, and that the shavings of

ivory, when boiled to a jelly, were just as nourishing as those of hartshorn.

“The most valuable teeth,” she added, “are those from the island of Ceylon, as they are supposed never to turn yellow.

“I see you are so interested by all these things, Henry, that to-morrow, if you will remind me, I shall tell you all about the Indian rubber that you are often using, and I daresay never thought how it was procured.”

“No, indeed, dear aunt, I never did ; and I shall long much for to-morrow.”

CHAPTER V.

TO-MORROW came, and Henry did not fail to remind his aunt of her promise, and she accordingly gave him the following account of the Indian rubber he used to rub out his pencil marks.

“Indian rubber is procured from the milky juice of a number of plants and trees, and on drying, assumes the appearance you see. In the countries from which it is procured, the natives use it for bottles, boots, and other articles, which they make of the required shapes by moulds of clay, covering them with coats of the substance, one upon the other, as they dry ; and when it becomes thick enough, and is properly hardened by the sun, they pull out the moulds, whose form the bottles or boots ever afterwards retain.

“ These Indian-rubber, more properly caoutchouc, plants grow in Asia and America.”

"This is curious indeed," said Henry; "and only think of my being so stupid as to have used Indian rubber all this time and never to ask any thing about it!"

"I heard my uncle say something last night that surprised me very much, and if I had not been afraid of interrupting the conversation, I should then have put a question to him; for he said that the oil in the lamp was procured from the whale which we read of in the accounts of the great northern seas. Is that really the case, aunt?"

"It is the fact," said his aunt. "The oil we burn in our lamp is taken from the blubber of the whale, which lies under the skin, or rather is the skin itself, giving the creatures a thick warm wrapper in the frozen seas, and so firm and elastic, almost like the caoutchouc of which we were talking, that it resists the extraordinary pressure to which they are exposed in the fathomless deep. Whales are very harmless creatures, and so affectionate and tender to their young, that there have been

several instances of females allowing themselves to be killed with scarcely a struggle, after their offspring had been captured by the fishermen.

“In the stomach of the spermaceti whale, so called because that substance is procured from it, ambergris is found. In Europe it is merely used as a medicine, but the Africans and Asiatics are very fond of it in cookery.

“I almost forgot to tell you that the bones of the whale are of great use, as whalebone is indispensable in the manufactory of various articles.”

The next morning Henry rose with a beating heart, for it was the day that his uncle had promised him his reward, which he could not recollect having done any thing to forfeit, though he had several times nearly forgotten his resolution. He had, however, taken the utmost pains to correct all his slovenly habits.

As a great treat, he was permitted to breakfast with his uncle and aunt, and heard with delight that the latter had given him so good a character that he was to have his promised

reward ; and he therefore waited with great anxiety to see what it could be.

“ Now,” said his uncle, as soon as they had finished breakfast, “ I shall show you the present I have for you.”

Mr Arlington then took him by the hand, and after kissing him and saying how pleased he was to think he had conquered his faults, led him to the hall-door, where stood, bridled and saddled, one of the prettiest little white ponies imaginable, with a long white mane and tail.

Henry jumped about and clapped his hands with joy, kissing first his uncle, and then his aunt in his ecstasy, which was greatly increased by Mrs Arlington’s presenting him with a beautiful little whip mounted with silver.

“ And may I get on my pony to-day, uncle ?” said the happy boy.

“ Yes, this moment ; Benjamin shall lead you round the park, and in a few months I daresay you will be able to ride with a leading rein. And now, my dear, mount your pony, and ever continue to deserve him.”

"That I will, my dear kind uncle," thought Henry ; and the pony was led off, arching his pretty neck as the child stooped forward to caress and pat him.

After Henry had been out ten minutes, and began to feel himself more at home on the pony, he asked Benjamin to tell him some pretty name by which he might call his new favourite.

"Suppose you call him Tidy, Mr Henry," said Benjamin, "and then it will always remind you how you got him."

"So I shall," said the delighted child ; and the pony from that day went by the name.

He rode several times round the park, and each time he was more pleased with his pretty steed.

When he came home, his uncle, who had been watching for him at the door, took him round to the stables to show him the stall allotted to Tidy ; "but next summer," said Mr Arlington, "we shall turn him out in the park for a run ; it is a shame to keep him always

confined here, as he likes fresh grass much better than dry hay."

When Henry was nine years old, he was too big a boy for Mrs Arlington to continue to educate ; and although his uncle had given him much instruction in Latin, he now required more time and attention than it was in the power of his uncle and aunt always to bestow.

Being a very tractable and good boy, they had become so fond of him that they did not like to part with him. Instead therefore of sending him to school, a gentleman of the name of Thompson was engaged as his tutor.

At first Henry missed the gentle manners of his aunt, but soon became reconciled to the change ; and when he found Mr Thompson was a kind and good-natured man, never harsh or unjust, he grew exceedingly fond of him.

Nobody felt this change more than Egerton, as she now saw him only for a few minutes whilst he was getting up or going to bed ; but she knew it was for his benefit, and had too

much good sense not to be pleased with the arrangement.

Henry himself often regretted how seldom he could now find time for a gossip with his dear nurse; and Mr Thompson, seeing the respect and esteem in which she was held by the whole family, gave him leave to spend an hour or two in her room whenever he had a holiday.

This indulgence was always a great delight to Henry, as well as to Egerton, and he generally contrived to provide himself with a little present for her on these occasions. Sometimes it was a russia-leather needlecase, sometimes a workbox, or a pretty bit of china. In short, Egerton's room was completely ornamented with Henry's testimonies of affection, of which she was not a little proud; but what she valued more than all, was a handsome rosewood writingdesk he had given to her on her birthday, with secret drawers to hold her money.

Since Mr Thompson's arrival Henry had

made rapid progress in his studies. He was a very tolerable Latin scholar, and had begun Greek, besides being well grounded in Roman and Grecian history.

One day, as Henry was taking his usual walk with Mr Thompson, his attention was much taken up with watching the numberless flights of birds of all descriptions that they met with during their ramble, and the conversation naturally turned upon the different habits of these little feathered songsters.

Henry had met a gentleman a few days before, who was mentioning having seen some humming-birds whilst residing in Demerara, and he begged Mr Thompson to tell him all about these most wonderful little creatures.

"I shall most willingly tell you all I know," replied his tutor.

"Of the humming-bird there are many kinds: the smallest has a long black bill scarcely larger than a needle, and its body is about the size of a bee, but a trifle longer, with little delicate legs and feet. It makes the same humming noise

as that insect during its flight in the air, and it lives upon minute insects, and the sweets it extracts from the flowers.

“ The plumage of humming-birds is very beautiful, and varies in the different species.

“ These tiny creatures are subject to such fits of passion, that they will fight over a flower till one of the little combatants is either killed or sinks down exhausted with rage.”

“ How curious !” said Henry, after his tutor had finished this description ; “ what would I give to see one alive !”

“ A great many attempts have been made,” replied Mr Thompson, “ to tame them, and various cages have been tried for that purpose, but their fury at not being able to escape from confinement is such, that they generally beat themselves to death against the bars.

“ One person, however, whose name I forget, hit upon a very ingenious experiment to retain a couple of these beautiful little birds, by fitting up a room filled with pasteboard flowers painted to imitate real ones, the bells of which were

filled with honey or sugar, and it succeeded so well, that they lived for several months without regarding their imprisonment. I know this to be a fact, but cannot bring to my recollection what eventually became of them, although I think they made their escape through a window that had been carelessly left open; but, Henry," continued Mr Thompson, "were you not listening to Mr Crawford the other evening whilst he was giving us a most interesting account of the wourali poison, which the Indians of South America employ in the destruction of their game?"

"Indeed yes," replied Henry, "and what astonished me more than all was, his telling us that it was perfectly safe to eat the birds and beasts after they were shot with arrows tipped with such a deadly poison that it destroys life in a few seconds."

"It certainly," said Mr Thompson, "is the most wonderful poison known. Mr Waterton, the celebrated traveller, has given a description of it in his 'Wanderings in South America,' and I can remember that amongst the

ingredients of which it is composed, the principal is the wourali vine, from which the poison derives its name. There is also a bitter root, and two bulbous plants that have a glutinous juice, the names of which he could not discover. But the most curious portion of the poison consists, I think, in two different species of ants, a red and a large black ant, the sting of the latter being so severe as to produce fever. Then a great quantity of the Indian pepper is added, with the fangs of the Labarri and Connachonchi snakes, pounded.

“Mr Waterton also mentions having seen a large ox killed with three arrows dipped in the wourali poison, and in five-and-twenty minutes from the time the first arrow wounded him he was dead.”

“What wonderful things there are to be seen in foreign countries!” exclaimed Henry. “What would I give to travel abroad to see them all!”

“There are wonderful things to be seen every where,” said Mr Thompson. “Foreigners

come to our country to see the rarities we possess in the extraordinary perfection to which we have brought our manufactories, and also to contemplate those wonders of nature, the Giant's Causeway in Ireland, and the Isle of Staffa in Scotland ; and we ought to esteem it a peculiar blessing, that although natural curiosities are not so abundant with us as in some other countries, yet we are free from those dangers which surround the inhabitants where venomous reptiles lurk in every thicket, while lions, tigers, and other beasts of prey, roaming about the fields, destroy the flocks and herds, and render it unsafe for man himself to wander from his dwelling."

" Indeed I forgot all that," said Henry, " otherwise I should not have been so foolish as to prefer such countries to my own."

" I am sure you would not," said Mr Thompson ; "and you see how we can trace the providence of the Almighty towards us, for if we carefully examine the blessings enjoyed by all, we shall find them most equitably distributed."

“ We have been talking much on subjects of natural history lately, and I do not think that there is any thing more extraordinary than the history of the beaver ; so if you have never met with an account of this indefatigable animal, I shall relate some particulars regarding it during our walk home.”

“ O thank you, sir,” exclaimed Henry, whose delight was always unbounded whenever he could coax Mr Thompson to talk on these subjects.

“ The wisdom or rather I should say the instinct of beavers is such, that the American Indians consider them human beings, who, for some wickedness, have been changed by the power of their God into the form of these animals ; indeed they go so far as to say that they have the faculty of speech, and that they have often been heard conversing. In the autumn they assemble together in numbers of about thirty, to begin building their houses for the winter. They choose some rivulet which they consider suited to their purpose, and then commence by sawing

down trees with their teeth. Cox, in his history of Colombia, mentions that nothing is more curious than to see these animals holding up their heads to watch a tree which is nearly sawn through ; and when the creaking of the timber warns them that it is on the point of falling, they scamper off in all directions to avoid any injury on its coming to the ground. When this part of the operation is accomplished, they immediately set to work and bite off all the leaves and branches ; and having divided the trunk into pieces, they roll them to the spot they have chosen. If any beavers are idle, they are chased away by those who overlook the rest, and are therefore obliged to live as they can during the winter.

“ Their skill in building their houses of mud is wonderful, and they take care to lay up stores of provisions to last them while the cold weather continues. You know already that their skin is most valuable in the manufacture of hats. And now,” said Mr Thompson, “ I see your uncle looking out for us at the hall-door,

and he is beckoning ; so run along, for I think he has been waiting some time."

Henry accordingly scampered off to the house, wondering why his uncle was in such a hurry.

" Well, Harry," said Mr Arlington, " you have had a long walk, for I have been waiting for you this hour. I have something to tell you that I fancy will give you pleasure."

" Pray let me know what it is, uncle," exclaimed Henry, his cheeks glowing with health and exercise, to which his uncle's speech had added a still deeper hue ;—" what can it be ?"

" How impatient you are, Harry ; but here comes Mr Thompson," who had by this time reached the house. " I daresay he will be curious also ; so follow me," said Mr Arlington, as he led the way to his study.

When he entered the room, Henry was still on the tiptoe of expectation, for he saw nothing but a large packing-case ; but on approaching it, what was his surprise and delight when he saw that it was actually directed to him !

Mrs Arlington, who was in the room, asked him if he could guess where the box had come from.

"No, indeed, aunt," hastily replied he, "what can it contain? does my uncle know?"

"No, Henry," said Mr Arlington; "for I would not on any account have opened it before you came home, as I thought that would take away half the pleasure of receiving it."

"O, thank you, dear uncle," joyfully said Henry, as he ran out to desire a servant to come quickly with a hammer and chisel to open the box. When the nails were at length drawn out, and the cover taken off, it seemed closely packed with hay and cotton, a circumstance which still more increased Henry's anxiety to see the contents, put up with such evident care. The hay was quickly removed, and they saw the top of a large glass frame, which, when taken from the box, presented to Henry's sparkling eyes a case full of South American birds, stuffed most beautifully and perched upon the branches of a tree. It is

quite impossible to express his joy when he discovered that two or three beautiful little humming-birds were amongst the collection ; and after his raptures were a little subdued, he recollected that they had not yet discovered from whom all these pretty presents came ; but upon searching amongst the hay, they found a note directed to Henry, who hastily tore it open and read as follows :—

“MY DEAR HENRY,—I was so very much pleased with the interest you took in the history of my adventures, and the great attention you paid whilst I was describing the beautiful birds of South America, that on my return home, where I had left a case of these birds, I thought I could not give them to any one who would value them more ; and I therefore have had them packed up and sent to you, and beg you will keep them for my sake. I have enclosed a short account of each bird, as it will make them doubly interesting ; and believe me my dear Henry’s affectionate friend,

“ARTHUR CRAWFORD.”

After Henry had read the letter, he could talk of nothing but the kindness of Mr Crawford in sending him such a beautiful present, and immediately sat down to write a letter full of the warmest expressions of gratitude.

Mr Thompson promised to read to him the description of the birds : and they went to put the glass-case into the little sitting-room occupied by Henry, who could hardly keep his eyes off them even to have his tea. The next day he did not fail to remind his tutor of his promise, who ever rejoiced in contributing to the amusement of a pupil so good and attentive to his studies.

CHAPTER VI.

“ I THINK we shall begin by reading the description of your favourite humming-birds, although I suspect we shall learn very little we have not heard before, considering how much it occupied our attention yesterday afternoon, before you had any idea of being the possessor of such beautiful specimens. However here is the paper I am to read.

“ ‘ There are many different kinds of humming birds, having red, blue, green, and almost every tint of plumage ; they vary much too in size ; one of the smallest being about the size of an humble bee, with two long feathers in the tail. It lives not only on the sweets it extracts from flowers, but also on the insects with which the flowers abound,—a fact most satisfactorily ascertained by opening the birds and discovering the insects in their stomach. Watterton gives this description of it :—

“ ‘ See, it darts through the air almost as quick as thought ; now within a yard of your fire ! in an instant it is gone ! now it flutters from flower to flower, to sip the silver dew ; it is now a ruby ! now a topaz ! now an emerald ! now burnished gold ! ”

“ This is indeed a beautiful description of your favourites,” said Mr Thompson, “ and gives us a very clear idea of these light little butterfly birds ; and I should say, judging from the specimens in your case, a most correct one.”

“ But what can that odd-looking bird be with such splendid plumage, and such a frightful bill ? ” said Henry.

“ It must be a toucan,” said Mr Thompson ; “ I shall look at the paper, and see what is there said about it.

“ ‘ There are numerous species of toucan, some larger and others smaller. They all lay their eggs in the hollows of trees, and are very sociable, which has caused many naturalists erroneously to imagine that they are gregarious. The

toucan is a very awkward bird on the wing, as it seems much incommoded by the size and weight of its bill. It feeds on fruits, eggs, and new-hatched birds, and makes a great noise in rainy weather, its note being very like the bark of a puppy.’”

“ But what handsome bird is this,” said Henry, “ about the size of our blackbird, which is brownish above, light grey beneath, and having white marks on the sides? What is it called, Mr Thompson?”

“ It is the very bird you so much wished to see. It is the mocking-bird; bearing also the more scientific name of the many-tongued Tanager—*T. polyglottus*.

“ ‘ It delights in the society of man, as it is always found close to some dwelling, and lives on fruits and seeds. Its imitative powers are very remarkable, as it will closely imitate the note of any other bird, as also the different cries of animals. It has a most curious nest, which it suspends from the branch of a tree.

“ ‘ But here is the beautiful Campanero, or, as

we call it, the bell-bird. See how snowy white is his plumage, except the spire on his forehead, which communicates with his throat, and is jet black dotted all over with small white feathers. This he can erect at pleasure, like the cockatoo. The great peculiarity of this bird consists in its note, which can be heard at the distance of three miles, and exactly resembles the toll of a bell at the intervals of eight or ten minutes.' "

"What an interesting description of all my birds," said Henry. "I am sure it is very kind of Mr Crawford to have taken the trouble of writing them for me, and at the bottom of the paper he says that he has gleaned all his information on the subject from Waterton's book."

Mr Thompson was quite of Henry's opinion, and rising, told him that it was high time for him to prepare for a ride with his uncle, who had promised to take him to Godalming to make some purchases ; and Henry was now become so good an equestrian, that he often accompanied Mr Arlington on any pleasant little

excursion, as he had long left off the leading-rein.

The afternoon was very fine, though rather cold, as autumn had made rapid approaches towards winter. The leaves were strewing the road in all directions ; but from the great number of holly and yew trees, for which that part of the country is remarkable, the landscape still looked smiling, and the bareness of the foliage did not greatly strike the eye.

They had been cantering merrily along for some time, and had just pulled up on account of a steep declivity, when a poor man came up to Mr Arlington and implored his charity.

Mr Arlington never turned a deaf ear to distress of any kind, and therefore reined in his horse, and listened to the tale of wo. The poor man gave a hurried account of having been turned out of his cottage as he could not pay his rent, owing to a long and severe illness, which had prevented him earning his usual wages, and added, as the tears fell down his wan cheeks, " I have left my poor

wife and three children faint and nearly famished with hunger ; it is now ten days since we were turned out, without a roof to cover us ; and having all our goods seized, I had not a farthing left to buy them food, except what was given me, and to-day I have not received a penny ; therefore, as my wife and children could go no farther from very exhaustion, I hastened forward in the hope of meeting some one who would take compassion upon us."

When the poor man had finished this melancholy recital, Mr Arlington replied, that he had not time just then to hear the whole of his tale, but gave him a shilling to supply his pressing wants, and told him that if he found his story, which he would make a point of inquiring into, true, they might go to the Priory that evening, and he would procure them a lodging in the village for the night, until he found out what could be done about supplying him with work.

He then desired the man to give him his

name, and that of the village where he resided, and leaving him overcome with joy and gratitude, Mr Arlington and his nephew proceeded on their road.

Henry had slipped behind to give the poor man a sixpence, and when he came up by his uncle's side, he could talk of nothing else, so touched had he been with the simple account of the poor fellow's troubles.

"We shall go over to Milford, and inquire if his history is true," said Mr Arlington, "as we shall pass it in our way, therefore he will not be kept long in suspense should he be deserving of assistance; but here are his wife and the three children he mentioned, and indeed they do seem overcome with fatigue. We will question her, and by that means shall be able in some measure to judge whether it be worth while to make further inquiries."

Mr Arlington accordingly stopped, and received from the wife exactly the same story the husband had related. He therefore told her to cheer up her spirits, as he had met her

the houseless wanderers. Mr Arlington, having heard the report of the neighbours, told Henry to trot along to Godalming, as they had lost a good deal of time in seeking information concerning the Roses.

Henry had taken this ride in order to buy a new fishing-rod, for which he had been some time hoarding up what remained of his money after laying aside his weekly sum for charitable purposes ; but he was so interested in these poor people, that he determined, if his uncle would allow it, to postpone his purchase, that he might be able to procure some furniture for the Roses. On questioning Mr Arlington, Henry was delighted to hear that he intended to give them the cottage next Martha Hall's, and to employ James on his own farm, in place of one of his men who had left him to go to Australia. He then mentioned his purpose respecting the furniture, to which his uncle replied, that it was better not to do things in too great a hurry ; but that if every thing turned out as

he expected, he should be happy to second his views, for he highly approved of the manner in which he intended to lay out his money. Their ride home was more rapid than usual, and they found Mrs Arlington anxiously awaiting their arrival, the lateness of the hour having made her uneasy lest any accident had happened. Henry, as soon as he had dismounted and his uncle had assured her they were both safe, eagerly told her of the adventure that had detained them ; when Mrs Arlington stated, that a person answering his description, with a wife and three children, had arrived, saying they had been sent by her husband to wait his return. She had accordingly ordered them into the servants' hall to get some refreshment ; but they had refused to come in, having but recently recovered from a fever, and being afraid of spreading the infection in the house of their benefactors. This trait in the character of the poor couple very much pleased Mr Arlington, who immediately ordered them to be supplied with a

hearty meal, and plenty of straw in a warm outhouse, where they might rest till the morning, when he would hear the whole of their distressing story.

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY was awake at an early hour next morning, so eager was he about these poor people ; and anxiously did he count the hours till breakfast-time, which he began to think would never arrive. At length, when the meal was finished, Mr Arlington told him that he might come with him to hear what Rose had to say ; so he went out with the rest of the party. They found the whole family looking much refreshed by their night's rest and the comfortable breakfast they had partaken of ; and after innumerable thanks for all their kindness, James Rose began his history.

“ I was born at Bramdean, in Hampshire. My father was a respectable farmer,—not one of those who think it beneath them to handle their own plough, but a man who always attended to his own business, brought up his

family respectably, setting the fear of God before their eyes, and giving them a good example. He was to be seen in his pew at church twice every Sunday, with his family, neatly but not showily dressed, seated beside him. My mother was a hardworking, notable woman, who brought up her daughters in such a way as to make them good wives for their equals, and nipped in the bud all affected airs and graces as quite unbecoming their station and prospects in life. As soon as I could handle a plough I became useful to my father; and never was there a happier family than ours, blessed as we were with plenty and contentment. But such happiness was, I suppose, too great to last. My father fell down in a fit, and, after lingering a few days, expired, to the inexpressible anguish of his whole family, who thus lost a loving husband and an indulgent parent. From this time every thing went wrong. I was not old enough to take the management of the farm, and my mother had during my father's lifetime so depended upon him

for every thing except what belonged exclusively to her own department, that she was totally unfit to superintend the operations of such an establishment. Misfortunes also seem never to come singly, for two of our cows died of a distemper then prevalent among cattle, and one of our horses was obliged to be killed, owing to an accident that happened to him when being led to water. These accumulated misfortunes, added to a particularly bad season, obliged my mother to sell the whole stock of the farm, with which we paid our rent to the landlord, who behaved most handsomely, offering to wait two years if it were necessary ; but to this we could not consent, as we very well saw that without my father it would never be any thing but a losing concern. After the sale she hired a neat little cottage in the same village, and land enough for a small dairy, the management of which she thoroughly understood ; and here we lived in tolerable comfort four years, paying our landlord, and having just enough for our exigencies. My two sisters went to ser-

vice, whilst I stayed at home to do what was necessary out of doors. I had one other brother, who had always been a cause of great anxiety to his family, though he behaved decently, until, after the death of my father, he insisted upon going into the army ; and on my mother speaking very seriously one night on the subject, and entreating him to abandon a project even the thoughts of which gave her such pain, he promised he would do so, and we all retired to rest. His word we had never been able to depend on ; but judge of my mother's feelings next morning when she found that Stephen was missing, and that nobody could give any information as to which way he had gone. After enduring a month's misery, which nearly broke my mother's heart, she received a letter from him, dated Plymouth, saying that he had enlisted into a foot regiment, but that he disliked the service very much, for he found a soldier's life a harder one than he had been accustomed to. He added, that they were daily expectation of orders to embark for

the West Indies, and that not one of them was expected to return, as all who went out there died of yellow fever. He therefore entreated us to strain every nerve to procure money enough to obtain his discharge, otherwise we might have his death to answer for. There was not a single word of repentance in his letter, or sorrow for having left his mother in such a disgraceful manner, after his solemn promise to the contrary,—nothing but commands to raise money for him. My poor mother was nearly distracted when she had finished reading the epistle ; and when I urged her not to distress herself on account of so unworthy an object, who, the moment he was relieved from the difficulties of his present situation, would entangle himself in still worse the very next opportunity, she begged me never to say so to her again ; ‘ and,’ added she, ‘ if he die of the yellow fever, how can I ever be happy again, if I do not feel that I have exerted myself to the utmost to save him from such a fate ? therefore, my dear James, go instantly and try how I

can raise the money, as I have at present only a few pounds in the house, which I had saved for the purpose of meeting any unforeseen expense or sudden accident that might befall us. I saw it was of no use to argue with my mother on the propriety of giving up her all for the sake of so worthless a son, so I did as I was desired ; and such was the respect in which she was held, that I found no difficulty in procuring the sum necessary, and the money was accordingly enclosed in a letter, and sent off immediately to Stephen. About the end of the week he returned, but not in the least abashed at his infamous conduct. He was a sad burden to us ; for he would not do any thing to earn a livelihood, or suffer me to do so, as I could not leave my mother, owing to his not choosing to put his hand to any thing to assist her. Nor was this all ; he was sometimes out all night, or did not return till four or five o'clock in a winter's morning. This caused my poor mother much terror, as she felt convinced that he had connected himself with a gang of poachers in

the neighbourhood ; and her fears were too well confirmed, when she saw him return one morning with his gun under his arm. Anxiety on his account preyed so much on her mind, that her health appeared gradually to sink under it ; while all that she said to him seemed only to make him worse, as he would then stay away from home several days together, as if he did it with a view to annoy her. More than once did she express her regret to me that she had not permitted him to go to the West Indies, ' for then,' she said, ' he would have died by the will of the Almighty, and now I shudder to think what may be his end. Happy indeed is it that my poor husband has not lived to see this day.'

" Well, sir, things went on in this manner till about the middle of winter, when one moonlight night Stephen having gone out as usual with his gun, we were alarmed about one o'clock in the morning by a violent knocking at the door of the cottage. As I went down stairs to inquire the reason of this

unusual disturbance, I met my mother looking as pale as death, and clinging to the railing of the stairs for support ; and upon my begging her not to be frightened, as it was most likely some of our neighbours who required assistance, she said, ‘ No, my dear boy, our misfortunes are come at last, and Stephen has at length been taken. I feel it must be so. I have expected for months past to be wakened in this manner.’—I saw it was of no use to stand talking, but quickly ran down stairs, as the knocking was repeated louder than before, and there was the sound of many feet, as their tread crushed the snow, which had been lying some days. I opened the door, and immediately saw, to my horror and surprise, the bleeding corpse of my unfortunate brother borne by two men. I was too late to prevent my mother coming down, as she had followed me whilst I was busy unfastening the house-door, and had fallen down in a fainting fit the moment she caught a glimpse of the body. It was placed up stairs in the room which he had left full of life and

vigour only a few short hours before. A kind neighbour came to take charge of my afflicted parent, and I sent off immediately for the surgeon, though I saw it was not of the slightest use, as the shot had penetrated his stomach, and he was quite dead. Whilst we were anxiously waiting for the doctor, I made inquiries how this dreadful accident had happened, and was told that my brother had that night joined a numerous gang of poachers, who had made an arrangement for going into the squire's preserves; and as they expected a severe contest with the keepers, they intended to make a desperate resistance. And so they did; but finding that they had the worst of the battle, and that several of their gang were wounded, they were making their escape over the hedge that bounded the plantation, when Stephen's gun went off as he was scrambling over, the whole charge lodging in his body, and he never spoke afterwards. His inhuman companions fled and left him to his fate; but the squire's keeper ran up, and finding who he was, with

the assistance of some of his men, brought him home. This was dreadful, but it was a relief to my mind to think that his death had not been owing to any struggle with his fellow-men, and a sad consolation it was. When the surgeon came, the moment he saw the body he said that all was over, and that he had died immediately, as the shot had touched a vital part. But to return to my distressed mother, who I found had just recovered her senses, and was thoroughly alive to the misery that had overtaken her, greatly increased as it was by the blame she attached to herself for having saved him from going abroad,—all I could say to comfort her seemed not to have the slightest effect, and nothing could rouse her from the deep melancholy that had settled down on her. When the inquest was over, which I most dreaded, and his body had been laid in the grave, I was in hopes that she would gradually regain her composure ; but, alas ! I soon found there was no more happiness for her in this

world ; her heart seemed broken, and she never held up her head afterwards.

“She remained in this state about four months, gradually getting weaker and weaker, when one morning she sent for me, and, taking my hand, she said, ‘My dear James, you have ever been a dutiful child to me, and God will bless you for it when I am taken away from you. I feel my time is rapidly approaching, and I look forward to it with joy, putting my trust in the mercies of the Almighty, and a firm reliance on the merits of my Saviour. What I have suffered since that dreadful night I cannot explain, and I look forward to being reunited to your worthy father in another world, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.’—I then felt her hand fall from mine, and saw that she was dying. She, opening her eyes once more, said, ‘Farewell, dear boy,’—and all was over. Thus left alone in the world, my only and beloved parent snatched from me, I felt that I should never be happy again ; but I soon found out that God tempers the wind to the

shorn lamb. My prospects were dreary enough, for during my mother's long illness, the dairy had gone all wrong, and was a losing concern, and after I had again sold every thing, I found myself at nineteen years of age with scarcely money enough to keep me three weeks. I determined therefore on leaving Bramdean, as I could not bear the sight of a place where I had suffered so much; and, packing up my little all, left Hampshire, and settled at Milford, where I found regular employment from the farmers, who thought me a good workman. Here I became acquainted with my wife, a steady young woman, who was living in service at the great house there, and at the end of two years we were married, having saved enough out of our wages to furnish our cottage comfortably. In the course of five years we had four children; still we worked the harder, and things went on happily with us, until I fell ill of a fever. The doctor's bill was very heavy, and my poor Mary and her four children also caught the infection. One little infant was taken

from us, the expense of whose funeral, with the heavy account for medical attendance and my own inability to work, threw us terribly behind, when our rent became due. You know the rest, sir," said the poor man, as, quite overpowered, he burst into tears on seeing his wife completely overcome by the recital of what they had suffered.

"I trust," said Mr Arlington, when Rose had ended his story, "that your sorrows are now at an end, for as long as I live, if you continue to act with the same regard to duty as you have hitherto done, you may rely upon me as a firm friend. I have a very nice cottage vacant in this village; you shall rent it; but this year I shall excuse your paying me any thing, and by that means you will soon make up for your illness. My nephew here," continued Mr Arlington, seeing that Henry wished to speak, but was too shy, "told me yesterday that he wished to give you some furniture, which will enable you to take the cottage without borrowing money to furnish it, and you can make it

more comfortable, as you get better on in the world. We have a good deal of company at the Priory, and if your wife likes she can have the washing, which will greatly assist you." The poor man and his wife had no words to thank their bountiful preserver, but their looks sufficiently told Mr Arlington that they were not ungrateful. "And now," said he, "you had better sleep in my outhouse a couple of nights longer, until your house has been properly cleaned, and my nephew shall go this afternoon and select the furniture he has promised you." This was indeed delightful news to Henry ; and as the party returned to the house, Mrs Arlington smiled when she asked him if he would have any objection to accompany her in the carriage that day, for she knew that he loved her so dearly that he liked nothing better than an excuse to be with her.

He readily followed Mr Thompson into their little study, and was so diligent that morning that he soon made up for the time lost in listening to unfortunate Rose's story.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT two o'clock the carriage came to the door, and Henry jumped into it with a light heart, looking forward to the joy the Roses would feel when the furniture was procured. His aunt told him, during their drive to the town, that she thought he would get much more for the money he had to spend if he bought some of the things secondhand, which plan he eagerly adopted. The first thing that delighted him was a very good dresser, with drawers and a cupboard underneath, which he purchased, also a firm round oak-table for the centre of the kitchen, and several washing-tubs and other necessary articles ; but then he found to his great dismay, after he had laid out all his money, that no furniture for their sleeping-room was yet bought, nor any crockery. He was in despair, till his aunt told him that Mr Thompson

had begged she would lay out half a guinea for him, and that that sum would just purchase all the earthenware and the pots and pans that were needed, while his uncle intended furnishing their sleeping-room, so that they would be very comfortable, and could add to their stock when they had the means. She then gave orders where the goods were to be sent, and they returned home, Henry eagerly looking forward to the next day, which was fixed upon as that on which the purchases were to arrive at Bromfield.

Mr Thompson had promised to Henry, that in the evening, should the night be clear, he would explain to him several things that he was so anxious to hear about the stars ; and as it turned out very fine and without a cloud, they sat with the windows open, that they might have a thorough view of the sky. He first observed how many of the stars were twinkling, whilst the others had not the same appearance.

“ Those that you observe twinkle,” said Mr Thompson, “ are fixed stars, and are not so

brilliant ; the others, which shine with a bright and steady light, are planets."

" Do tell me, is there any other difference between planets and the fixed stars?" said Henry.

" Yes," replied his tutor. " The stars are always to be seen in the same position, and shine by their own light, whilst the planets borrow theirs from the sun, and always move round him. How long do you think the light of the sun takes to reach our earth? It has been calculated by astronomers, that, owing to his great distance from us, the time occupied is no less than eight minutes. But take a peep through this beautiful telescope which your uncle has lent us, and tell me what you see that strikes you particularly."

Henry put his eye to the glass, and at length exclaimed, in great astonishment, " O sir, do come, here is a planet with a ring of light and seven stars all round it; what can that be?"

" That is the planet Saturn, and the stars are called its moons. Jupiter has four moons and

eight substances round him called Belts ; and the Georgium Sidus has six moons. There are other eight planets besides those already mentioned, making in all eleven,—namely, the Earth, Ceres, Vesta, Pallas, Mars, Juno, Venus, and Mercury. You may always know some of them by a peculiarity in their light. Venus is a yellowish white, the colour of Mercury is bright red, Jupiter is silver white, Saturn you may know by his ring, and Mars looks a fiery red colour. Venus is often called the morning star."

"How can that be," said Henry, "when I heard my uncle say the other day that he saw her as an evening star?"

"I can explain that very satisfactorily to you, my dear boy," said Mr Thompson, "by informing you, that Venus is termed the evening star when she rises to the east of the sun after he sets ; and when, on the contrary, she rises before him, and to the westward, then she is the morning star."

"But tell me," said Henry, as he was again

examining the sky through the telescope, "do tell me what that bright light is which seems to cover so much of the sky."

"That," replied Mr Thompson, "is caused by an innumerable collection of small stars, and is the Milky Way."

"Is the sun much smaller than the earth we live in?" said Henry.

"No, my dear," replied Mr Thompson, "it is, on the contrary, one million three hundred and eighty thousand times larger. There is to be an eclipse of the sun next month, and I daresay you will like very much to see it."

"Indeed I should," said Henry; "but, dear sir, do, if you please, explain to me the cause of an eclipse."

"When the sun is totally eclipsed," replied Mr Thompson, "it is caused by the moon coming exactly between the sun and our earth, and of course leaves us in darkness while it continues; but during a partial eclipse, only a portion of the sun is hidden by the moon.

In the same manner, the moon is said to be eclipsed when the earth comes between her and the sun, and obstructs the light by casting its shadow on the moon."

"That is very clear," said Henry, "and I am delighted to think that I can understand so perfectly the cause of an eclipse. But what are comets that I hear you talking about so often, for I have never seen them; are they like a star?"

"No, they are quite different; they are supposed to be large bodies of fire, and have long tails of light. Their rapidity of motion is such, that one of them was calculated by astronomers to fly at the rate of 14,000 miles in a minute. The extraordinary speed with which they run their course in the heavens is one of the reasons they so soon disappear. But you had better shut the window, for it is late, and the evening is very chilly. And now I hope I have given you some idea of the motions of the heavenly bodies; and when you are a

little older, if you like the study, we shall begin and regularly devote a portion of our time to astronomy."

Thus ended this long-wished-for evening, and Henry went to bed much gratified with the novelty of what he had seen and heard.

CHAPTER IX.

IN the afternoon of the next day the furniture arrived for the Roses' cottage. The worthy couple could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw all that was intended for them, and their thanks seemed never to be at an end. The kitchen was nicely arranged, and Mr Thompson's present of crockery and other things was much admired. Their bedroom was comfort itself; the bedstead that Mrs Arlington had bought for them, had neat blue striped curtains, and she told them that they should have a feather-bed as soon as her cook had collected feathers enough from the poultry consumed at the Priory, as she never allowed such things to be thrown away. After seeing all the articles unpacked, and the grateful family comfortably seated round their fire, the whole party returned home with thankful

hearts for having it in their power to confer such benefits upon their fellow-creatures, and being able to change misery and suffering into happiness and content. James set about his work directly, and his wife was overjoyed at finding such a plentiful supply of washing ; and being a sober and steady couple, they put by regularly what she received, living entirely upon the husband's wages. A few weeks after the Roses had been settled in their new abode, Henry begged his aunt would walk with him to see Dame Hall, for it was long since he had enjoyed a comfortable chat with the old woman ; and as Mr Thompson had given him a holiday, it seemed the very time for the purpose. His aunt, who was always glad of his company, readily consented, and off they set to see their old favourite. When they arrived, she was not to be seen on her accustomed seat in the porch, for the winter was fast approaching, and it was too cold, but they found her seated by the fire in her comfortable kitchen. Upon asking her how she was, Henry and his aunt

were grieved to find that she had not been well, but had been confined to bed for several days, from having wet her feet in going to draw water from the well. Martha was loud in the praise of her new neighbours the Roses. "O, ma'am, you don't know what kind creatures they are: when I was ill, there was Mary Rose, although in the midst of her washing,—for she is never idle a minute, ma'am,—there she was," continued Martha, "coming in every now and then to put me comfortable, or give me some tea, or see that my fire was not out; and ever since I have been able to go about, she will never allow me to go to the well for water, as she says she requires so much for washing that it makes no difference to her just to draw up one bucket more, or James does it for me when he returns from work. Did ye ever hear the like of such kindness, ma'am!" said Martha. "They are indeed worthy neighbours, and I owe them much for all their kindness to an old body like me, who can be of no use to them."

"I am quite delighted to hear such a good account of the Roses," said Mrs Arlington ; "they do indeed appear to me a most industrious family, and I hope the children are brought up well. Do they go to school?"

"Why no, ma'am," said old Martha, "but Mary says she will try and manage to send the eldest next year, as she has not time to teach him herself; and, ma'am, I have wanted to see you some time about this very subject, for I was thinking, if you considered me equal to the duty, that I might teach him to read, and by that means save expense to Mary, and make her and James some little return for all their kindness to me. Do you think I could, ma'am?" said Martha, anxiously waiting for Mrs Arlington's answer.

"Indeed, dame," replied that lady, "I think it a most charming plan, and one for which Mary and her husband will be most grateful, and I feel sure that your labour will not be thrown away upon such a worthy family; besides, I daresay it will amuse you a little, for

now that your grandchildren are all gone out into the world, you must feel rather lonely."

"I did indeed feel solitary sometimes, ma'am," said Martha, "but now when I feel so, I always send to beg that Mary will let one of her children come and keep me company, for they are no trouble; they are brought up so well, and are always so clean and tidy that it is a pleasure to see them."

It was a dull day, and Dame Hall's bees preferred their own warm hive to flying about, so that scarcely one was to be seen, except the sentinels keeping watch at the mouth of the hive to give notice of the approach of an enemy,—a precaution rendered necessary from the number of insects that pilfer their stores, especially various kinds of moths, and wasps and hornets, still bolder plunderers.

As the party were seated in the cottage, the old woman suddenly exclaimed, "O, Mr Henry, you cannot think what a comfort my Prayer-book is to me; I can read it almost without my spectacles. I never shall be able

to thank you enough for such a beautiful present."

Henry replied, that he was glad to think it was so useful. "But, dame, I have brought you a bit of finery to wear for my sake," said he, as he presented her with a gown, the ground of which was dark chocolate, figured with the lilac, rose, and convolvulus. I hope you like it?"

"It is quite beautiful, Master Henry," said Dame Hall; "but is it not much too fine for a poor body like me?"

Henry informed her that his aunt had chosen it; and the good old woman thanked them a thousand times, and was soon reconciled to the bunches of gay flowers printed on the sober ground. They then took their leave of the cheerful dwelling, and proceeded to the cottage of the Roses, to see how the family were getting on. They found Mary very busy washing; her husband was out at his work, but every thing seemed to be most comfortable, and all looked as clean as a new

pin. Mrs Rose overpowered them by her gratitude, and said that she and her husband had never felt so happy in their lives, adding, that what James always used to say had indeed come to be true in a most wonderful manner in their case, that God provides for us when we little think of it, and still less deserve to be so cared for. The three children had quite recovered from their illness, and were well-behaved modest-looking little creatures, and ran to open the gate for the gentlefolk when they took leave of them. As they were walking through a very retired lane on their way home, Henry caused his aunt to start by a sudden exclamation of surprise, pointing at the same time to the road before them, where she had just time to see a weasel crossing to the adjoining field. Henry had never seen this animal before, and was therefore much astonished at the length of its body, which is nearly four times its height. He anxiously inquired of his aunt if she could give him any information about such an odd-looking

little animal, and she replied that she would most willingly tell him all she knew.

“ You saw, my dear, that its colour was a brownish-red, and its throat and stomach white. I never saw it walk, as it appears generally to leap or bound, and in climbing a tree it ascends by springing up several feet at a time. It is a most wily enemy to other animals, and commits much greater ravages amongst rats and mice than even a cat, as it can slip after them almost every where, owing to the slim form of its body. During the day, the weasel generally remains in its hole fast asleep ; but when the sun is set, away it creeps in search of its prey. It kills small birds and animals, and is occasionally destructive in the neighbourhood of henhouses, devouring the eggs and young chickens, though it seldom ventures to attack an old fowl.

“ Opinions differ as to the possibility of its being easily tamed ; but Buffon, in his natural history, mentions that he had seen two which had been rendered perfectly so ; that would

follow their master every where, and were very playful and harmless."

Henry thanked his aunt for her description of this remarkable little creature, and when he got home informed Mr Thompson of what he had seen. His tutor told him that the gamekeeper had that afternoon discovered a badger's hole, which he thought Master Henry would like to see, and that next day they would proceed to the place and examine it.

The morning unfortunately was so very wet, that, impatient as Henry was to enjoy their promised walk, he was obliged to give it up, which he did without a murmur, as he considered how insignificant such an occurrence was, in comparison with the serious disappointments that happened day after day to many. In the afternoon, about three o'clock, the sky cleared a little, and at last out burst the sun, when Henry and his tutor immediately took their way to the badger's hole. Here they found the keeper waiting for them, with several other men, who had assembled for the purpose

of destroying the badger's habitation, owing to the urgent necessity of felling a noble tree which grew exactly on the spot ; but the animal itself had been captured and taken to the Priory. The subterranean dwelling it had dug for itself was extremely curious, for it had scooped out several chambers, although there was but one entrance ; and Mr Thompson remarked, that when the badger has young ones, it carries grass into the hole to make them a nice soft bed. Henry was very sorry that the creature had been disturbed in its comfortable house, and after examining the different apartments, he returned home to see the animal itself, which had been secured in a shed to prevent its escape. Henry admired it much, particularly its face, which was marked with black and white stripes, while the under part of the body and throat was black, and the rest gray. Mr Thompson informed him of a peculiarity respecting the hair, which next the root is of a yellowish white colour, and at the middle is black, so that three distinct shades

are thus produced. This he promised to show to his pupil so soon as the animal became tame enough to be approached with safety.

"Can it ever be tamed?" said Henry, with much surprise. "I thought it was a very fierce creature."

"That is quite an error," said Mr Thompson, "arising from the keenness of its bite when attacked. It defends itself with great obstinacy, but is naturally harmless, and when young, is so easily tamed, that it has been known to play about with dogs as familiarly as if they belonged to its own species. In that state it will eat any food that is offered to it. During a deep snow it sometimes remains in its burrow several days, for it can live without food longer than most animals, and a very little makes it extremely fat. Fortunately for this most inoffensive of all animals, badger-baiting is no longer a favourite sport in this country, as it was attended with most atrocious cruelty."

"Do you think we shall be able to tame it?" said Henry.

Mr Thompson replied, that he was much afraid they should not succeed in so doing, as it did not seem young enough to forget all its former haunts and habits.

The afternoon still continued so fine, that Mr Thompson was tempted to prolong their walk; and Henry amused himself by asking innumerable questions about the Polar Regions, and his tutor promised that he would read to him the accounts of those dreary parts of the world, written by officers who went on expeditions to the North Pole. Henry was much astonished to hear that the inhabitants only enjoy a few weeks of warm weather, after which frost continues more or less severe throughout the rest of the year. "August," continued Mr Thompson, "is the month in which snow first falls, and by the end of September the ground is covered to the depth of two or three feet. Then comes a winter in which the whole country is wrapt in darkness,

except when the moon shines, or the sky is illumined by the aurora borealis. The inhabitants, clothed from head to foot in bear-skins to protect them from the cold, remain shut up in their uncomfortable dwellings, which are lighted by lamps supplied with oil from the carcass of the whale or the seahorse. And thus for months together do these miserable creatures doze away the time in a monotonous existence, until about the month of May, when the sun is once more to be seen above the horizon. Their short summer, however, is far from agreeable, as the heat is excessive, which, with the dampness of the climate, produces multitudes of mosquitoes, that torment them so much by the sharpness of their bite, as to compel them to take refuge within their smoky cabins.

“The seas of these desolate regions swarm with herrings, and the rocks with innumerable wild fowl ; while on shore are to be met with the bear, that extraordinary creature the walrus, together with the wolf, the fox, the hare,

the rabbit, the reindeer, and some others. The Esquimaux are much annoyed by the wolves that prowl about their dwellings, into which they will even venture, to seize and carry off the dogs. These domestic animals are used for drawing sledges, and travel at the rate of a mile in six minutes if not overloaded, eight or ten of them being generally harnessed to one vehicle."

"And pray, sir," said Henry, "are there many plants in these frozen countries?"

"There is a great scarcity of vegetable life," said Mr Thompson; "but I know there is one plant that Providence has bestowed on these regions, which flourishes even under the snow, and that is a plant called the scurvygrass, owing to its efficacy in the cure of that dreadful disease, so common where food is often scarce and unwholesome."

"We have had a most delightful walk," said Henry, as they entered the house, "and I have learned a great many things this afternoon which I had not the least idea of before, and I

am sure, sir," continued he, turning to his tutor, "I do not know how I shall ever repay you for the trouble and patience with which you teach me."

"I am rewarded, my dear boy, by the attention you pay to your studies, and your affectionate conduct towards me," said Mr Thompson, while he pressed Henry's hand, as they separated to prepare for dinner.

CHAPTER X.

A FEW weeks after the above conversation, Henry was much gratified on his birthday by his uncle presenting him with a very pretty little chesnut horse, his pony Tidy being now considered unequal to his weight, for he had grown a big boy since the day he had earned him as a reward for resolutely curing himself of his slovenly habits. Being of course impatient to try his new steed, and proud of having a horse of his own, Mr Arlington rode out with him, and, as it was the first day Henry had mounted, they confined themselves to the park. The animal had been constantly out to exercise for three weeks before, and was reckoned by the grooms to be perfectly quiet and tractable. Henry cantered and trotted along much to his own satisfaction, and was patting and praising him for his gentleness, when he suddenly prick-

ed up his ears and became very restive. Mr Arlington listened attentively, when he heard the cry of hounds, and almost immediately the whole pack burst in sight in full cry, and were quickly followed by the huntsmen. Away went Henry's horse like a shot. In vain did he attempt to pull him in ; neither curb nor snaffle were of any avail, for on he dashed, perfectly maddened with the sport, and rapidly approached the fence, which he took in fine style. Henry managed to keep his seat ; but Mr Arlington's terror was extreme, when he saw the horse still going at great speed, and he felt there was scarcely a hope left that his nephew could escape with life. His feelings were most painful, for he dared not follow, as it would only have added to the impetuosity of the animal ; but what was his horror, when he saw them rapidly approaching a stone quarry, which could not be perceived until close to the edge, when it would be too late to be able to avoid it. At this moment he saw James Rose leap over an adjoining hedge, and manfully seize the bridle.

This made the horse swerve so suddenly from the precipice to which he was hastening, that Henry was thrown with great violence to the ground; and James, being entangled in the bridle, was dragged along, at a fearful rate, until the animal, at last stumbled, and fell over him. The moment was a most painful one; the horse struggled till he disengaged himself, and then, getting upon his feet, rushed across the park.

By this time Mr Arlington had galloped up, accompanied by several other gentlemen, who instantly dismounted, and ran to the assistance of Henry and his preserver. The former had broken his arm, but was perfectly collected, and begged his uncle not to be frightened, but to attend to James, who had risked his life for him. The poor man was found perfectly insensible, the blood running out at his eyes, nose, and mouth, from the force with which the horse had fallen upon him. A doctor was instantly sent for to attend both the sufferers, whilst Mr Arlington galloped forward to pre-


pare Mary Rose for the scene she was to encounter, and he could not sufficiently admire the Christian fortitude and resignation she evinced on this trying occasion.

Henry was put to bed, and when the doctor arrived and examined his arm, he found that it was but slightly fractured, and told him he was going to set it, but that he must not mind the operation, which would necessarily be a painful one. Henry replied, that if his aunt would only stay by him, he would bear any pain ; to which Mrs Arlington immediately assented, although she knew that it would be a sore trial to her. He bore the operation with great fortitude, after which Mr Hawkins desired that he should be kept as quiet as possible, as he had given him a sleeping potion, which would, he hoped, secure him a tolerable night's rest. The first thing he asked when he awoke next morning was about James Rose, when his aunt, who had been sitting by the bedside all night, replied, that the doctor had found it necessary to bleed him, but that he was

better than could have been expected. This greatly relieved Henry's mind, who felt deeply grateful to his preserver. By six o'clock that morning Mr Arlington was at the cottage, and asked Mary if she thought it would be injurious to her husband to see him.

"Oh no, sir," replied the distressed woman, who had evidently been crying all night, "I think it would do him good, for he supposes he is going to die, and wishes to say something to you. Mr Arlington hastened to reassure her, saying, that although her husband was suffering greatly from the effects of the accident, still the doctor had informed him that there was no danger. He followed her up stairs, and found Rose lying very quiet; but the sick man's eye brightened when his benefactor entered the room, and he attempted in vain to raise himself in the bed.

"Lie still, Rose," said Mr Arlington, gently, you are too much bruised to be able to get up; but I am come to see you, for we could not rest a moment, after we heard you were sensible,



until we had expressed our gratitude and thanks to you for so courageously saving the life of our dear boy. Nothing else could have rescued him from being dashed to atoms, and words are inadequate to express the extent of our obligation."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed the poor man, his face beaming with pleasure at the praise which was no more than his due, "do not thank me, sir; I cannot bear to hear you talk of being indebted to me, when, had it not been for Master Henry, Mrs Arlington, and yourself, we might all have been dying of want. How could I have done otherwise!"

"My good fellow," rejoined his master, "we only put you in the way of earning your bread honestly, and what you receive from me is only your due; but you have saved Master Henry's life, and if there is any thing in the world you wish for, that is in our power to bestow, I only beg you will ask it."

Rose seemed so hurt at the idea of receiving a recompense for what he considered his duty,

that Mr Arlington forebore to urge the subject. He pressed the poor man's hand, and wishing him good bye, told the wife, that as he knew they were both so scrupulous, he had given orders that her husband was to receive every day from the Priory whatever was prescribed by the physician, "who," added Mr Arlington, is our doctor, and has no claims on you of any kind for his attendance. And now God bless you both, for Master Henry is waiting all this time in the utmost anxiety to hear how you have passed the night."

When Mr Arlington returned to the Priory, he went immediately to report what had passed at the cottage to Henry, who was much disappointed to hear that Rose would accept nothing. He was himself going on favourably, for there was little fever, and he was so sensible a boy that he took whatever was ordered without a murmur, and by that means contributed much towards his own recovery. One day, as Mrs Arlington was sitting by him, he said, how grateful he ought to feel to the Almighty

for having preserved his life in such a wonderful manner, and that he hoped he should never be so ungrateful as to forget it. His aunt replied, that she hoped indeed it would be a never-failing subject for thankfulness; "but we all are too apt," she continued, "to forget the inestimable blessings we receive, when time has lessened the danger and the gift, and we allow our religious feelings to slumber until some signal mercy or punishment awakens us from our carelessness. How little did you, my dear Henry, imagine, when you last left the house in company with your uncle, that you would be in a short half-hour in peril of your life! This ought to make us seriously reflect, that whilst we are slighting the commands of our God, we may be at any moment summoned to appear before him."

CHAPTER XI.

IN about ten days Henry was allowed to leave his bed, and was removed to the sofa in his own little room, where his kind tutor used to sit beside him, and amuse him by conversing on interesting subjects, as his pupil was not yet able to study his lessons.

James Rose gradually recovered from the effects of his accident, and Henry's constant inquiries and kind messages to him contributed not a little towards the establishment of his health; for nothing gave him such heartfelt pleasure as these kind remembrances from the family at the Priory.

One afternoon, Mr Thompson came up to sit with Henry, and told him that he had been very busily employed all the morning reading a book called Cuvier's Animal Kingdom, which he found most interesting. This

was a favourite subject with Henry, for nothing interested him so much as the study of natural history ; and he immediately asked his tutor if he had read the history of the crocodile, as he was particularly anxious to hear it. Mr Thompson said that he had, and proceeded to give the following short sketch of this most voracious of all animals.

“ Crocodiles in general frequent the shores of lakes, rivers, and swamps in Africa and America. In ancient times, they were held sacred in Egypt, where they were worshipped as gods, and buried with royalty itself. They are fierce and voracious, and have been known to devour dogs, and even oxen, that approached the water to drink. When, however, they have gorged themselves to their utmost, they can be approached with perfect safety ; and Cuvier mentions, that one has been known to live a whole year without taking any sustenance. They are enormous creatures, and their tremendous jaws open to a fearful size, armed with rows of teeth that are truly terrific. They are

very heavy, and clumsy in their motions on land, but in water can swim with great facility. They lay their eggs in the sand, in which they cover them up, and leave them to be hatched by the heat of the sun. The Indians kill them for food, part of the tail being esteemed a great delicacy. Their cry is very loud, and in the evening and during the night it is fearful to hear a whole swamp resound with their bellowings. They smell strongly of musk, and when dead the odour is so intolerable that it is very disagreeable to approach them. In ancient times, the Egyptians considered the flesh of these animals as a sovereign remedy for many of the most dangerous diseases, but the present enlightened generation place no reliance in its healing properties.

“Some species of the crocodile make holes in the ground, where they continue during the winter, and when the cold is very severe, it is said that they may be cut almost to pieces without rousing them from their state of torpidity. When, however, it has all its faculties

thoroughly restored in the hot season, it is not easily overcome, being covered with a complete coat of mail, and a skin of such amazing thickness, that not even a musket ball can make any impression upon it. The only vulnerable parts are the stomach and the eyes. I have now, I think, told you all I recollect about the crocodile ; and before I forget, I must tell you all I know concerning the cameleon, which I have often heard you express a wish to have described."

"O thank you, my dear sir," said Henry ; "do pray begin, for I am all impatience to hear the account ; and if you are not tired, perhaps you will then tell me something about the basilisk and the salamander, if there really be such creatures in existence."

"I shall begin with the cameleon," said his tutor. "They are found in Asia and Africa, but only in the very hottest regions. You have seen a cameleon, and therefore must have observed the great peculiarity of its tongue, which is very long and sticky, so that it is well

adapted for securing its prey, which consists of flies and all kinds of small insects. They remain on the same branch of a tree a long time, fastened securely by means of their tail, which they fix round it. They are very slow in their movements, and easily fall a prey to other animals, having no means of defence, and being themselves perfectly inoffensive. Cuvier says that its skin is yellow, its blood bright violet blue, and its outer covering transparent, which I conclude may in a great measure account for the extraordinary changes of colour to which it is liable. These changes are effected by the sensations of the animal itself, which, as they come into operation, produce successive alterations on the tint of the skin. When perfectly calm, and in its natural state, it is green. It is remarkable also for being able to swell itself out to double its ordinary size.

“ I shall now proceed to describe the basilisk, of which superstition and vulgar prejudices have given such absurd descriptions. It is a species of lizard, and little is known about it,

except that it lives by the side of water, feeds on insects, and is not unlike a cameleon in its general appearance. This is all I can tell you of what in the present day goes by the name of the basilisk. I need not repeat the ridiculous stories concerning the animal so named by the ancients, which is now supposed never to have had any existence. It was principally celebrated for having the power of killing a person by a glance of its bright and terrible eye, and of poisoning the air by its breath. Its origin was asserted to be from the egg of a cock brooded upon by a serpent, whence it was also called a cockatrice.

“ You will recollect reading a fable about the salamander, in which that creature is described as being able to live in the most intense fire,—a story in which there is not even the shadow of truth. One species of salamander is found in Germany and France ; and Cuvier says that a drop of its saliva touching the tongue gives it a sensation of burning. It lives in damp ground or ditches, and has often been discovered under

stones, hedges, and in old buildings. I forgot to mention that a kind of poisonous liquid oozes through its skin, but only kills very small animals. So different is its constitution from what is stated regarding it by ancient writers, that it dreads even the heat of the sun, and only ventures abroad during the night, remaining in its hole all day, except in wet weather. It lays eggs, and lives on snails, worms, and insects. There are two species of this animal,—the one I have been describing, and the aquatic salamander, which differs in several respects from the former.

“And now, my dear boy, you look tired, and must not hear any more to-day, so I shall leave you to take a nap, while I enjoy a walk, and when I return I hope to find you quite refreshed.”

When Mr Thompson left the house, he thought he would go to Dame Hall's, for he knew it would please Henry to hear how the good old woman was, as she had been very ill of late. Having arrived at the cottage, he

found her in bed, and much altered. She expressed great pleasure at hearing that Master Wilmott was rapidly recovering; "but," said she, "I should like to have seen that kind young gentleman once again before I die, for I feel, sir, that my time is come, and it is the will of God that I should leave this world. The Almighty has been very good to me, sir, sending me friends in my distress, and I trust he will receive me into his heavenly kingdom, where sorrow and suffering are alike unknown. I do not presume upon my own merits, for I know what a poor weak sinner I am, and therefore I humbly approach his presence, trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ, whose commands I have tried to obey, although I have too often forgotten his precepts. I do not fear to die while I have such an advocate with my God, and am looking forward to the time when he shall admit me to everlasting happiness, and when I trust I shall meet those I have loved best on earth. O, sir!" continued Martha, "what a kind Father we have!

He has sent his word to be our guide and counsellor in this world, and to procure us unending enjoyment in the next. It is indeed a religion of mercy."

Mr Thompson was much impressed by the composure and Christian resignation of the good old woman, and asked her, whether she would like him to read to her. She replied, that she should indeed be grateful if he would take the trouble, and requested him to let her hear our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, of which she said she was never tired, it being written for both the rich and the poor, and a great comfort to all, particularly those in affliction. When Mr Thompson had shut the book, Martha continued some moments silent, and at length said, "I feel my strength failing very fast, and think I have not many hours longer to live. When I am gone, sir, will you be so very kind as to beg Mr Henry's acceptance of all the curiosities my grandson brought from abroad, which he used to admire so much; and tell him, sir," she added, the tears rolling

down her furrowed cheek, "tell him that I hope he will keep them as a remembrance of old Martha, who loved him dearly. The Prayer-book he was so good as to give me, I cannot leave to any body who will value it so much as the Roses. Will you, sir, therefore see that they have it, and my bees also?" Mr Thompson, much affected by the simple expression of Martha's gratitude, promised that he would see all her wishes fulfilled, and, rising to go, added, "to-morrow I will come to read to you again."

"I thank you much," said she, "but I trust by that time I shall have seen my Saviour himself. Good bye, kind sir ; do not forget to tell Master Henry I asked for him ; and a thousand thanks to Mrs Arlington for all her kindness to me ever since I have known her." Martha could say no more, but sunk back exhausted on her pillow. Mr Thompson, when he went down stairs, gave strict injunctions to the nurse to pay every attention to her patient, and returned home immediately, feeling in no humour

to extend his walk. His meditations, though grave, were by no means painful. It was true he had most probably seen the last of an old friend, but then he had the consolation of thinking that he had witnessed a happy death-bed, the fruit of a well-spent life. He thought over her history, remembered her cheerfulness, her ready assent to every proper amusement, the good example which she set on all occasions, and the Christian reproof she administered when any improper levity of conduct or conversation was ventured in her presence. He then reflected on the difference in the character of Betty Smith, who made long faces, and was not to be persuaded even to witness an innocent game of ball-playing. Which of them was most to be admired? The one who prayed to her Father which is in secret, and, as our Saviour has commanded us, entered into her closet and shut the door; or the other, who prayed as the hypocrites did, at the corners of the streets, that they might have glory of men? Again, instead of doing any good to religion, old

Betty, by her austerity and discontent, made people take a dislike to it. Then she abused her neighbours, and was the very reverse of being happy or cheerful ; whilst her example could never benefit any one, as she shut herself up for fear of contamination, if any amusement was spoken of. She stunned people with long texts of Scripture, forgetting our Saviour's injunction not to use vain repetitions, but to keep her religion for her closet, and that true faith is best exemplified by charity. Martha, on the other hand, suffered long, and was kind, was not easily provoked, and thought no evil.

When Mr Thompson arrived at the Priory, he went immediately to Henry's sitting-room, and found him much better after a refreshing sleep. He listened attentively to his tutor's description of the scene he had just witnessed, and also of the two characters he had sketched during his walk home, remarking, that he hoped to be able to imitate Martha's example, for he felt sure that a heart so charitably disposed towards the failings of others, was generally

more severe towards its own. As the basis of our Saviour's doctrine was humanity and charity, he felt sure that Martha Hall was as perfect a Christian as any human being could be with the imperfections and sins belonging to our nature.

CHAPTER XII.

NEXT day Henry was so well that the doctor said he might go down stairs, and that if the day after was fine, he might venture out. When Mr Thompson returned to Martha's cottage, he found she was dead, and he therefore proceeded to the Roses to mention what Dame Hall had left to them. James had just come in to his dinner, having been able to work some days, and both he and his wife were looking very sorrowful, for Mary had attended her to the last, and said that she died the same evening Mr Thompson had visited her, and had left the world calmly and without pain. When Mr Thompson told them of the Prayer-book, they said that it would indeed be valuable in their eyes as the gift of Master Wilmott, and that the old woman had herself told them about the bees. "However," added James, "I should

not like to have taken them, unless you had been a witness that it was her wish. Indeed, sir, her death was a most happy one, for all her children and grandchildren had arrived, and soothed her last moments with their affection ; and I think that nobody ever left this world more regretted by friends, relations, or neighbours. But is it true, sir," said James, "if I may make so bold as to ask,—is it true that Mr Henry is to go with you to Oxford as soon as his health is perfectly re-established ? We shall miss him sadly."

"It is true James," said Mr Thompson ; "I and my pupil go to Oxford this time next year, as he will not be old enough till then. He will, however, be at home during the vacations, so that you will not lose him entirely from among you ; and I venture to predict, that as he approaches to man's estate, he will lose none of that high principle and affectionate concern for the welfare of others, which in boyhood have so endeared him to us all."

Deep was the regret in the whole village when they heard of Henry's intended departure; and when the time at length arrived, both his uncle and aunt, as they wished him adieu, pressed him to their hearts, and entreated him never to forget or be ashamed of the feelings of his early years. Accompanied by his attached and worthy tutor, Henry improved in every manly and Christian virtue, and returned to his kind relatives a striking example of the advantages and happiness to be derived from firm and undeviating principles of religion. His first action, when, at the age of twenty-one, he came into possession of the fortune he inherited from his parents, was the discharge of his debt of gratitude to James Rose. He bespoke for him one of his uncle's farms, stocked it completely with cattle and implements of husbandry, furnished his house, paid his first year's rent, and presented him with a hundred pounds with which to begin the world.

Old Betty's end was melancholy. No

anxious relations cheered the close of her life, or smoothed her pillow at the parting hour ; for all had been frightened away by her gloomy and repulsive notions of religion, wrapt up as she was in a cloak of self-righteousness, and abusing as she did all who entertained more rational views on the subject.

The rest of Henry Wilmott's life was spent in setting a good example ; and when he married, his children were brought up as he himself had been ; for he thought much of that text of Scripture, "Train up a child in the way he should go ; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Mr Thompson never left his beloved pupil ; for when the living of Haslemere became vacant, Mr Arlington procured it for him, and he was universally loved and respected there by rich and poor. Seldom indeed was there to be found such a happy circle as in that village, where religion flourished in its true character, diffusing cheerfulness and brotherly love in the hearts of all within its sphere.

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